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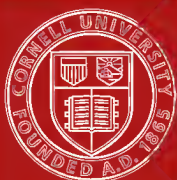
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John Miller

HISTORY

OF THE

ABINGTON BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

FROM 1807 TO 1857.

By EDWARD L. BAILEY, A. M.,

PASTOR OF BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH, CARDONDALE, PA.

“Beginning at Jerusalem.”

PHILADELPHIA:

J. A. WAGENSELLER, NO. 23 NORTH SIXTH ST.

1863.

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P R E F A C E .

There are in Pennsylvania seventeen Baptist Associations, embracing nearly four hundred churches, with a membership of some forty thousand. Their history, extending over the last century and a half, has never been written and published in a connected and permanent form. The materials for such a work, are widely scattered and will ere long pass beyond recall, unless

NOTE—There have been twenty-three Baptist Associations organized in Pennsylvania as follows, viz., Philadelphia, 1707; Redstone, 1776; Chemung 1796; Juniata, 1800; Abington, 1807; Beaver, 1809; Susquehanna, 1818; Northumberland, 1820; French Creek, 1823; Bridgewater, 1825; Washington, 1826; Centre, 1830; Central Union, 1832; Monongahela, 1832; Bradford, 1835; Clarion, 1837; Pittsburg, 1839; Tioga, 1842; Wyoming, 1842; Conemaugh, 1843; Clearfield, 1846; North Philadelphia, 1858; and Ten Mile, 1858. The Redstone, Chemung, Juniata, Conemaugh, Washington, and Susquehanna, have disbanded.

The history of the Susquehanna Association was written by the late Rev. Joel Rogers, of the Wyoming Valley, and published in pamphlet form in 1832. The history of Chemung Association was written by the late Rev. Thomas Smiley, A. M., of the White Deer Valley, in about 1830. The manuscript is in the possession of his son, Thomas T. Smiley, M. D., of Philadelphia. The early history of Philadelphia Association, the oldest in the State, and indeed in the United States, was written by the late Rev. Horatio Gates Jones, D. D., one of its pioneer pastors, and published in 1832-'33, in numbers in a Baptist periodical called *The World*, a complete file of which is in the Library of Horatio Gates Jones, Esq., son of the author and present clerk of Philadelphia Association.

they are soon gathered and garnered in the form of local histories, or deposited in the Library of the Baptist Historical Society. The course of the Abington Baptist Association, has been sketched in the following pages as a slight contribution to the history of Pennsylvania Baptists.

In this work I have sought to correctly trace the gradual growth of this Association, from its obscure origin, through the first half century of its subsequent existence. I have sketched its Annals, Churches, and Pioneer Ministers, marking the various steps and stages of its progress; its reverses and revivals; its trials and triumphs.

The materials for these sketches have been carefully gleaned at irregular intervals of opportunity or inclination, during the past ten years, from various sources more or less reliable, as the published Minutes, Church Records, Annual Letters, monumental inscriptions and indistinct recollections of surviving friends. The information thus furnished has not always been entirely reliable or harmonious. In cases, however, of doubt or discrepancy, by carefully culling and collating the different statements, the essential facts have usually been satisfactorily determined, and such of them recorded as seemed of sufficient interest or importance.

It has not been my design to severely criticise the

course or character of the Association, but rather to present the bare facts of its history and leave others more competent, to decide as to their beauties or blemishes. Neither have I indulged in mere empty praise or harsh censure of the numerous persons named in these sketches. However, where it seemed necessary, I have not hesitated to write plain things of some whose general course may have been eminently proper and praiseworthy, while I have not unfrequently made honorable mention of others whose subsequent years may have been marred by grave defects or even gross and grievous apostasy. My notices of many of these, have been but casual, and necessarily incomplete. They were hastily sketched as they appeared at the time, however ugly or elegant might have been their posture or position. Thus seeming injustice may have been done to both classes; the one receiving undue praise, and the other unmerited censure.

In these sketches an occasional repetition will be observed, both as to fact and language. This could not easily be avoided on account of the intimate relation and general similarity existing among their numerous subjects. The career of the six Pioneer Ministers noticed, possessed much in common and little in contrast. The place and period of their birth and ordination, were nearly identical. Their subsequent lives were passed amid similar scenes and associations.

The thirty-five Churches sketched, were planted and trained under kindred circumstances. A faithful description of one would be appropriate to all, with but slight variations. The fifty Anniversaries described, were much alike in their general aspect and exercises, affording little opportunity for variety either in matter or manner. I have, however, aimed in these sketches to give prominence to peculiarities in their subjects and thus secure a degree of variety and avoid as much as possible the use of favorite phrases and stereotyped expressions.

In closing this Preface I will not deny myself the pleasure of recording my obligations to the numerous persons who have kindly aided me in collecting materials for this work. To the Rev. Zelotes Grenell, whose name stands prominent in the Annals of the Association; and the Rev. Charles Miller, the esteemed pastor for so many years of the Clifford Church, I am peculiarly indebted for timely assistance. I have also received valuable information from the Revs. A. M. Calkin, Rial Tower, J. M. Ball, J. B. Kenyon, Lewis Peck, Benjamin Miller, J. B. Case, Charles Parker, B. B. Bunting, D. W. Halsted, I. Bevan, and Elijah Sturdevant; also from Messrs. Thomas Y. Atherton, S. Owen, E. K. Norton, Alvinzy Gardner, and many others. Mrs. Sarah T. Cramer, of Greenfield, Mrs. Eunice L. Torrey, of Bethany, and Mrs. Elizabeth H.

Peck, of Mt. Pleasant, have also furnished dusty documents and rare reminiscences of much value and interest. I am indebted to the pious care of the last named for the preservation of the Manuscript Minutes of the organization of the Association.

In the humble hope that this work may cherish the memory of the Pioneers of this Association and encourage their sons and successors to emulate their pious zeal and self-sacrificing example, and thus subserve the cause of Christ and the good of man, it is now diffidently submitted to the candid consideration of the Christian public.

E. L. B.

CARBONDALE CITY, PA , DEC. 1st, 1863.

ANNALS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

The Abington Association originated in a sensible necessity. Three Baptist churches had been formed at different periods and distant places in North-Eastern Pennsylvania. The church at Palmyra, Wayne county, was organized in the Fall of 1801; that at Abington, Luzerne county, in the Spring of 1802, and that at Mt. Pleasant, Wayne county, in the Autumn of 1807. These churches were situated about thirty miles from each other, and separated by an almost unbroken wilderness traversed by bridle paths or traced by blazed trees with peculiar difficulty and often personal danger. The ministers and members of these infant and isolated churches, felt the necessity and importance of mutual counsel and encouragement. Having ascertained the wants and wishes of each other, from frequent interviews and friendly correspondence, a Convention of delegates from these three churches, was held on Saturday, December 26, 1807, at the log cabin of Rev. John Miller, in Abington, for the purpose of forming an Association "in order to gain a more general union and fellowship for the promotion of the welfare of Zion and spread of the Gospel in the world." The meeting was opened by singing and prayer, and a sermon was preached by Rev. Elijah Peck, from Ps. 118: 24.

“This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” The Convention was then called to order, and organized by appointing Rev. Epaphras Thompson, moderator, and Mr. Nathaniel Giddings, clerk. Letters were read from Abington and Mt. Pleasant Churches, but from some neglect no letter was forwarded from Palmyra Church. The first of these reported 103 members; the second, 8; and the third about 29; making 140 as their total membership. The following persons were present as delegates from these churches, viz., from Palmyra, Rev. Wm. Purdy and Wm. Purdy, Jr.; from Abington, Rev. John Miller, Wm. Clark, Jas. Hulse, Roger Orvis, Jonathan Dean and Nathaniel Giddings; and from Mt. Pleasant, Rev. Epaphras Thompson, Rev. Elijah Peck, and Samuel Torrey. Rev. Samuel Sturdevant, of Braintrim, and Rev. Davis Dimock, and Joel Rogers, a licentiate, of Exeter, were also present and by request took seats in the Convention and part in its deliberations.

The moderator having stated the object of the meeting, the Convention proceeded to business. After listening to an extract from the minutes of Shaftsbury Association, on the nature and design of Associations, and freely interchanging and fully harmonizing their views and opinions, it was unanimously resolved “to unite and combine to keep an annual Association, to be called the ABINGTON BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.” A committee was then appointed to “draft the plan of a Constitution for the churches in combination,” and report the same to the Convention on the next day, consisting of the following persons, viz., Wm. Purdy, John Miller, Epaphras Thompson, Samuel Torrey, and Nathaniel

Giddings. Messrs. Davis Dimock and Joel Rogers were also invited to "sit with and hear the committee."

The above committee reported on the following day, a constitution which was unanimously adopted by the Convention, setting forth in its preamble the cardinal doctrines of the Bible and distinctive principles of Baptists, in the following quaint language, viz., "Holding the doctrines of three persons in one Godhead, the same in essence, equal in power, but different in office—the total depravity of mankind in their fallen estate—the free grace of God manifested in the recovery of those that believe in Christ—final perseverance of saints from grace to glory—baptism by immersion—the resurrection of the dead—final judgment and the condemnation of the finally impenitent to as long duration as the happiness of the righteous." Rev. John Miller was also appointed to present a circular letter and preach the introductory sermon at the first anniversary of the Association. The Convention then dissolved and the members dispersed. Thus originated the Abington Baptist Association.

FIRST DECADE, 1807—1817.

The First Anniversary was held at the house of Rev. Wm. Purdy, in Palmyra, commencing on the second Wednesday of October, 1808, John Miller preaching the introductory sermon and perhaps officiating as moderator on that occasion. The churches reported about 190 communicants.

The Second Anniversary was held at the house of Mr. Elijah Dix, in Mt. Pleasant, commencing on the last Wednesday of August, 1809. It is presumed that Wm. Purdy preached the introductory sermon and officiated as moderator, thus meeting with the churches in a triangular circuit and appointing their pastors to preach and preside by a liberal rotation. The churches reported 240 communicants. No minutes were printed of the first three meetings of this body; to supply this deficiency the clerk was instructed to furnish each church with a fair copy in manuscript for circulation among its members for their information and improvement.

The Third Anniversary was held at Abington, August 29th and 30th, 1810. Introductory sermon by Elijah Peck; Wm. Purdy moderator, and Nathaniel Giddings clerk. Reported 14 baptisms and 250 communicants. "The church at Abington requested brethren present, to assist in the ordination of Mr. John Phillips as Deacon of said church." He was ordained according to request with the usual appropriate services. The sermon was preached by Rev. Luke Davies, who was present as a messenger from Warwick Association, the only body thus far admitted to fraternal correspondence.

The Fourth Anniversary was held at Palmyra, August 28th and 29th, 1811. Introductory sermon by Samuel Sturdevant; Elijah Peck moderator, and John Phillips clerk. Reported 23 baptisms and 251 communicants. An unusual number of ministers were present, as messengers from other Associations, aiding in the services and adding to the interest of the occasion. Most of the usual business was transacted on the first day of the session, affording ample opportunity for devotional exercises. On the second day, sermons were preached by Revs. Benj. Pierce of Madison, Wm. Bishop of Philadelphia, Lebbens Lathrop and John Wintermote of Warwick Association; thus pleasantly and profitably improving the time redeemed by dispatch in the usual routine of business.

The Fifth Anniversary was held at Pittston, August 26th and 27th, 1812. Introductory sermon by Wm. Bishop; Wm. Purdy moderator, and Nathaniel Giddings clerk. Reported 15 baptisms and 256 communicants. Only nine delegates were present from the churches, six being from Abington, and three from Palmyra Church, but none from Mt. Pleasant Church. Mr. Phillips was appointed to write the usual letter to Warwick Association, and it was directed that in future the corresponding letter be printed with the minutes. The time for holding the annual meeting of the Association was also changed from August to the first Wednesday in September. Cheering sermons by Messrs. Purdy and Miller appropriately closed the services of the session.

The Sixth Anniversary was held at Abington, September 1st and 2d, 1813. Introductory sermon by John Miller; William Bishop moderator, and John

Phillips clerk. Reported 3 baptisms and 252 communicants. Messrs. Ira Justin and Stephen Bishop, licentiates of Abington Church, preached before the Association. One Potter and five Purdys represented Palmyra Church. No delegates were present from Mt. Pleasant Church or from abroad. The session, however, was pleasant and harmonious, but no business was transacted of especial interest or importance.

The Seventh Anniversary was held at Palmyra, September 7th and 8th, 1814. Introductory sermon by Lebbeus Lathrop; John Miller moderator, and Ephraim Torrey clerk. Reported 21 baptisms and 264 communicants. Rev. Henry Ball, from the Warwick Association, preached a sermon by invitation, and Mr. Phillips was appointed Treasurer of the Association. The churches were also requested to "raise money by contribution once in each year, to defray the expenses of printing minutes, and of our messengers to other Associations." This is the first mention made of money in the minutes.

The Eighth Anniversary was held at Mt. Pleasant, September 6th and 7th, 1815. Introductory sermon by Lebbeus Lathrop; William Bishop moderator, and Rufus Grennell clerk. Reported 19 baptisms and 277 communicants. Revs. Levi Holcomb and Orange Spencer were present as messengers from Franklin Association, and a correspondence was opened with that body. Delegates were also appointed to Warwick and Chemung Associations. On the evening of the first day of the session, "meetings were held at several places in the neighborhood."

The Ninth Anniversary was held at Abington, September 4th and 5th, 1816. Introductory sermon by

Jonathan Ferris ; John Miller moderator, and Nathaniel Giddings clerk. Reported 13 baptisms and 283 communicants. The Treasurer made his first report as follows, viz : “\$22.36 received and \$13.00 expended.” The following extract from the circular letter of this session will be read with a mournful pleasure: “It seems as though the Lord had entered into a controversy with us and commissioned the pestilence that walketh in darkness and wasteth at noon-day, to ravage our land and remove our fellow-laborers. Among those taken from us, is our beloved brother William Bishop, who had long and faithfully labored in the Gospel and whose godly zeal, sage counsel and exemplary deportment will long be remembered. From other portions of the Lord’s vineyard we have cheering intelligence. By our brethren from the northward we learn that the Lord is making bare his arm in the conviction and conversion of sinners. We have also received similar information from the State of Rhode Island. With great satisfaction we learn that strenuous efforts are being made to diffuse the ‘glad tidings’ among the benighted of Asia and that it is also proposed to send missionaries among the savages of our Western wilds.”

The Tenth Anniversary was held at Palmyra, September 3d and 4th, 1817. Introductory sermon by Levi Hall ; John Miller moderator, and John Phillips clerk. Reported 20 baptisms and 289 communicants. At this session the Bethany Church was admitted into the Association. Rev. Lebbeus Lathrop, by request, addressed “the congregation on the subject of a contribution for domestic use,” followed by a collection for that object. This was the first collection taken in the

Association. It was also "recommended that contributions be made by the several churches and congregations of this Association, for the purpose of Domestic Missions."

Thus ways were devised and means employed to secure "material aid" for the support of Domestic Missions and supply of destitute neighborhoods. But nothing had yet been done, as is presumed, to aid the cause of Foreign Missions. A missionary spirit, the earnest of missionary enterprise, was, however, early manifested by the ministers and members of the various churches composing the Association. It was breathed in their devotions and preached in their discourses. It was also seen in their efforts to bring their families and friends to Christ and bear the messages of mercy to different and distant settlements. The same spirit was apparent in the circular and corresponding letters of the Association. These speak of the guilt incurred by "withholding what God has reserved for the promotion of his cause and good of his people," and also of the encouragement given "to preach the Gospel in the name of Jesus to the ends of the world;" and, again, of the consolation derived from "hearing of the prosperity of Zion and progress of the Redeemer's kingdom;" and, finally, of the hope entertained that "Zion may soon become like a low spreading vine, many more finding rest under her shadow, and the peaceful reign of Emmanuel gladdening every heart on earth." Such were the "Christian salutations" expressed by "the ministers and messengers of this Association" in their circular letters of 1810 and '11, and corresponding letters of 1812 and '13, and "sent greeting to the churches

they represent" and to the "dear brethren of the Warwick Association."

In the latter portion of this decade the cause of Foreign Missions was repeatedly brought to the notice of the Association, and its claims were persistently urged upon the attention of the churches, by the Corresponding Secretary of the "Baptist General Convention," formed at Philadelphia in the Spring of 1814. It is interesting to observe with what seeming suspicion and apparent caution the subject was at first received and entertained. It was, however, candidly examined and finally cordially endorsed. At the annual meeting of the Association in the Autumn of 1814, "Bro. Miller presented a letter from the Missionary Society for Foreign Missions, which, after some consultation, was postponed for further consideration at the next meeting." The subject was resumed at the annual meeting in 1815, and "it was voted that brother John Miller be a standing Secretary to correspond with the Board of Foreign Missions, and that he be directed to purchase at least *six* copies of their Annual Report for the use of the churches." Again, in 1816, "the Secretary was instructed to send for *ten* copies of the ensuing Annual Report." Finally, in 1817, "the Corresponding Secretary was authorized to procure *thirteen* copies of the ensuing Annual Report of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, for the use of the Association." Thus the cause of Foreign Missions was cautiously approached, and information gradually acquired, until its character was clearly appreciated and its claims were cordially approved. In this manner and by these means the way was prepared for intelligent action, persevering effort and enlarged benevolence.

SECOND DECADE, 1817—1827.

At the commencement of this decade the Association embraced three pastors and four churches, with a comparatively small and scattered membership. The country was still new and the population poor and sparse. Few houses of worship being yet erected, meetings were statedly held at the most central places in different neighborhoods, usually at private dwellings or school houses, but frequently in log barns or even in the leafy grove. The congregations, though usually small, were uniformly earnest and attentive.

The Eleventh Anniversary was held at Bethany, September 2d and 3d, 1818. Introductory sermon by John Miller, who was moderator, and Rufus Grennell clerk. Reported 84 baptisms and 375 communicants. The Clifford and Greenfield Churches were admitted into the Association; the latter church being destitute of a pastor, various brethren in the ministry were appointed to supply it at stated times during the current year. The interest of the occasion was greatly increased by the presence and preaching of Revs. Elisha Tucker, from the Franklin, and Zelotes Grenell, a licentiate, from the Warwick Association. The rich and racy discourse of the latter, from 1st Sam. 22: 2—a characteristic text—was remarked at the time and is perhaps still remembered by some with peculiar interest. During the Associational year most of the churches had enjoyed quite extensive revivals and received numerous accessions. Grateful allusion was made to this, in the following extract from the corresponding letter of that year. “We are happy to say that the present session

has given us great consolation. During the past year many precious souls have been made the subjects of Almighty grace."

The Twelfth Anniversary was held at Mt. Pleasant, September 1st and 2d, 1819. Introductory sermon by Levi Baldwin; John Miller moderator, and Ephraim Torrey clerk. Reported 38 baptisms and 410 communicants. Dea. Jeffery Dean was appointed Treasurer of the Association in place of Dea. John Phillips resigned. The usual number of messengers from corresponding bodies were present, and participated in the duties and deliberations of the meeting. Rev. Jehiel Wisner was present as messenger from Ontario Association, and a correspondence was opened with that body. "The session," to quote from the corresponding letter, "was pleasant and delightful. Though we cannot report large accessions to our churches, yet the greatness and goodness of God, are equally manifest in bringing a few into his kingdom and leading them by his grace to walk in his commands."

The Thirteenth Anniversary was held at Clifford, September 6th and 7th, 1820. Introductory sermon by Nathaniel Otis; John Miller moderator, and Nathaniel Giddings clerk. Reported 6 baptisms and 377 communicants. The moderator "was appointed as messenger to Philadelphia Association, for the purpose of opening a correspondence with that body." Also, a request presented by Rev. Griffin Lewis, on behalf of Susquehanna Association, to open a fraternal correspondence, was entertained, discussed and postponed. The subject, however, was resumed at the following anniversary, and the request was finally refused at the session of 1822,

on the ground of unsoundness in doctrine. On the second day of the present session, the Association having resolved itself into a council, proceeded to examine Mr. Ira Justin, a licentiate of Clifford Church, and ordain him as an Evangelist. The interest of the occasion was greatly increased by the ordination services.

The Fourteenth Anniversary was held at Abington, September 5th and 6th, 1821. Introductory sermon by Nathan Harned; John Miller moderator, and Nathaniel Giddings clerk. Reported 61 baptisms and 437 communicants. The Association met for the first time in a meeting house, the second erected within its bounds. A house of worship had previously been built by Dea. Thomas Shields, of Philadelphia, at Damascus, and was now occupied by the Baptist church recently organized in that place. Mr. Ira Justin was appointed to preach at Tunkhannock on the first Lord's day in December, and second in June following.

The Fifteenth Anniversary was held at Palmyra, September 4th and 5th, 1822. Introductory sermon by Zelotes Grenell; Elijah Peck moderator, and Ephraim Torrey clerk. Reported 28 baptisms and 494 communicants. At this session the Damascus Church was admitted into the body, and a correspondence was opened with the Northumberland Association. The churches did not report especial prosperity, but they had continued steadfast amidst adverse interests and influences as is shown by the following extract from the corresponding letter of that year: "Though we cannot rejoice over large accessions, yet we bless the Lord that the churches remain steadfast and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. This we con-

sider of essential importance in times like the present when men will not endure sound doctrine but are heaping to themselves teachers after their own desires. False prophets are abroad, who by fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple and decoy them down the dark stream of 'damnable heresies' and delusive hopes."

The Sixteenth Anniversary was held at Bethany, September 3d and 4th, 1823. Introductory sermon by Henry Ball; John Smitzer moderator, and Sheldon Norton clerk. Reported 66 baptisms and 564 communicants. An unusual number of delegates from the churches, were present, increasing the effect and interest of the occasion. The monotony of previous years, was somewhat disturbed by the introduction of unusual subjects for discussion. The baptismal formula, constitutional amendments, ministerial education, and the morality or immorality of dancing, were among the subjects entertained and opposed or approved. The last subject, presented by the Bethany Church in the form of a query, was freely debated and finally disposed of in the following manner: "We consider that dancing is highly improper and ought not to be practised or encouraged by any professing Christianity." The following query was also proposed to corresponding bodies: "As the Greek word *baptizo* means to immerse, would it not be preferable in the administration of that ordinance, to say, 'I *immerse* thee?'"

The Seventeenth Anniversary was held at Damascus, September 1st and 2d, 1824. Introductory sermon by John Miller, who was moderator, and M. A. Bidwell clerk. Reported 26 baptisms and 615 communicants.

The Eaton and Scott Churches were admitted into the Association at this session. A letter was also "received from the chairman of a Committee appointed by the Philadelphia Association, on the subject of forming a State Convention." The measure was approved and delegates were appointed to aid in forming the proposed Convention. The recent death of Rev. Wm. Purdy, one of the pioneer pastors of this wild region, cast a gloom over the deliberations of the meeting and filled many hearts with sadness. A resolution was passed tendering the sympathies of the Association to the Palmyra Church, of which the deceased had been the esteemed pastor since its organization, a period of nearly a quarter of a century.

The Eighteenth Anniversary was held at Abington, September 7th and 8th, 1825. Introductory sermon by John Smitzer, who was moderator, and Sheldon Norton clerk. Reported 17 baptisms and 612 communicants. A full delegation were present from the churches and from abroad. The session was "distinguished by harmony in its counsels and an amiable spirit and uninterrupted glow of brotherly love." Mr. Sheldon Norton was appointed Corresponding Secretary of the Association in place of Rev. John Miller, resigned, and correspondence was opened with the Berkshire Association. The Committee appointed in 1823 to revise the rules of order and constitution of the Association, reported at this session, a constitution and rules of order which were taken up by sections, discussed, amended and adopted by the Association. Every attempt since made to essentially modify this constitution, has thus far signally failed, not so much on account of its intrinsic

excellence as from the character of, or construction given to its last Article. At the close of this session a vote was passed for the first time, to "present the thanks of the Association to the church and congregation, for their kindness and hospitality." The obligation was formerly considered mutual.

The Nineteenth Anniversary was held at Mt. Pleasant, September 6th and 7th, 1826. Introductory sermon by John Miller, who was moderator, and Sheldon Norton clerk. Reported 26 baptisms and 628 communicants. The Gibson and Jackson Church was admitted into the Association at this session, and application was made by the Bridgewater Association to open a fraternal correspondence, which was considered "inexpedient at present, though we heartily rejoice at their separation from the Susquehanna Association." The application, however, was cordially granted at the next session, when it was voted "that we open a correspondence by letter and messengers with that body."

The Twentieth Anniversary was held at Palmyra, September 5th and 6th, 1827. Introductory sermon by Daniel Platt; John Miller moderator, and Sheldon Norton clerk. Reported 26 baptisms and 633 communicants. Of the ten churches composing the Association, only two reported settled pastors; most of the other churches, however, enjoyed occasional preaching by licensed or resident ministers. About this time the churches in this and other sections, were greatly annoyed and frequently deceived by numerous impostors who were prowling over the country and palming themselves off on the community as regular ministers of the Baptist denomination. The destitution of these feeble

churches, and seclusion of this wild region, furnished an inviting field and ample protection for these "wandering stars" and wicked pretenders. The names of not less than eight of this character, were published in the minutes of this session and the churches warned against their pretensions; and in order to guard more effectually against their impositions, the personal peculiarities of some were minutely described, and "the brethren particularly requested not to invite a stranger to minister to them in holy things unless he bear with him credentials of a recent date and the most unmistakable validity." Such were the pains taken and precautions exercised to protect the churches, in their infancy and inexperience, from the presence and preaching of men of unsound principles and unsafe practices.

During this decade various objects of Christian benevolence received a measure of attention and encouragement. Among these objects, the cause of Domestic Missions occupied a prominent position. Small sums were contributed by some of the churches and occasional collections taken at the annual meetings of the Association for this worthy object. At the session of 1818 the Treasurer of the Association reported some six dollars on hand for Domestic Missions, and a visiting brother was "requested to solicit Rev. Levi Holcomb to come and spend two weeks as our missionary within the bounds of the Association, at five dollars per week." Also at the session of 1821, a discourse was preached on the claims of Domestic Missions, followed by a collection of some ten dollars for that object, and a larger committee was appointed "to prepare the minds of the brethren for the formation of a Domestic Missionary

Society.” The subject was kept before the Association in various forms until the session of 1827, when “the committee on Domestic Missions, made a report, recommending the formation of a Domestic Missionary Society,” at the close of the session, distinct from the Association. The report was adopted and after adjournment, “the members of the Association, and religious friends generally, met and united in forming an Evangelical Society whose principal object will be to have the Gospel preached to the poor and destitute within the bounds of the Association and parts adjacent.” Messrs. John Miller and Horace Jones were appointed “Agents of this Society, to obtain subscriptions and invite the attention of the friends of truth to this object.”

The cause of Foreign Missions was also frequently entertained, endorsed and encouraged by friendly resolutions and fair promises. At the session of 1819, a letter from Mr. Luther Rice, Agent of the Baptist General Convention, being presented, a vote was passed by the Association, “expressing their entire approbation of the measures already taken, and promising to use every effort that their infant state would admit, to give information and further the views of the Board.” Also in 1821, “a letter from the Board of the Baptist General Convention was read with deep interest, and the Association sincerely rejoice in the diffusion of the Gospel, and feel disposed to afford every aid in their power to promote its salutary influence.” Again, at the session of 1823, the Association say “that we entertain a high sense of the evangelical exertions of the Baptist General Convention—the Board of Managers—Agent and Missionaries.” Finally, at the anniversary of 1824, a cir-

cular from the Baptist General Convention being received and read, the Association "resolved that we cherish an affectionate regard for that body, and bid them God-speed in their labors of love." Thus the claims of Foreign Missions were frequently entertained and endorsed, yet little if any "material aid" was thus far raised or rendered to that deserving object.

The cause of ministerial education was also introduced during this decade, and aided by frequent collections. Although most of the ministers in the Association were self-educated, yet they were not indifferent to the growing intelligence of the people and increasing demand for a learned as well as laborious ministry; nor were they unfavorable to raising funds and rendering facilities for training young men called of God to the responsible work of the Christian ministry. At the session of 1823, it was "resolved that in future a collection be taken at each annual meeting of the Association, for the benefit of the Theological Seminary at Hamilton, N. Y." Also at the session of the Association, in 1824, after a discourse by Rev. John Sears, an address was delivered on ministerial education by Rev. Howard Malcom, followed by a collection of ten dollars for that object. Again, at the session of 1825, "Rev. John Smitzer made an affectionate and feeling address" on the same subject, and a collection of upwards of eight dollars was taken for the same object. Finally, at the session of the Association in 1826, Rev. John Smitzer preached a sermon on the office and object of the gospel ministry, and a collection of some five dollars was taken "in aid of the Theological Seminary at Hamilton." Thus promises issued in performances, and small amounts were annually furnished in aid of ministerial education.

THIRD DECADE, 1827—1837.

The Association entered upon this decade with four ordained ministers and ten churches scattered over an extensive and promising field. The membership were not numerous or wealthy, but a foundation was laid for accelerated growth and increasing usefulness. The church at Abington, the most prosperous in the body, had already erected a convenient house of worship and dismissed members to unite in forming four independent churches. The forest had slowly retired before the hardy pioneer until the population generally were beginning to enjoy most of the comforts and many of the conveniences of civilized life.

The Twenty-first Anniversary was held at Abington, September 3d and 4th, 1828. Introductory sermon by Horace Jones; John Miller moderator, and Sheldon Norton clerk. Reported 97 baptisms and 736 communicants. At this session the Falls Church was added to the body, and the Gibson and Jackson Church was dismissed to unite with the Bridgewater Association. Three of the churches reported settled pastors and most of the others stated supplies, being chiefly licensed ministers. To aid and encourage the more destitute churches, quarterly meetings were appointed at Bethany in October, Clifford in January, and Scott in May following.

The Twenty-second Anniversary was held at Canaan, September 3d and 4th, 1829. Introductory sermon by William Frear; John Miller moderator, and Charles H. Hubbard clerk. Reported 36 baptisms and 695 communicants. A Committee appointed on the state of

religion, made substantially the following report, which was embraced in the corresponding letter for the information of other Associations: "Within the bounds of this Association, many appear to possess a spirit of engagedness, yet others seem to be indifferent even in a cause so glorious. During the past year some of the churches have received a number of additions, while others destitute of regular preaching, have remained cold and careless. The cry, however, is often heard, 'come over and help us.' With us the present is an important time. The recent opening of internal navigation, has invited a numerous population and built up a number of flourishing villages. Now is the time to enter and occupy these inviting fields." During the session a number of able sermons were preached by ministers from abroad, to comparatively large, solemn and attentive congregations.

The Twenty-third Anniversary was held at Clifford, September 1st and 2d, 1830. Introductory sermon by John Miller, who was moderator, and Sheldon Norton clerk. Reported 96 baptisms and 782 communicants. Most of the churches reported settled pastors, and a few large accessions. This is gratefully alluded to in the following extract from the corresponding letter: "In view of what God has accomplished, we should be encouraged to more vigorous exertions. He has prospered us during the past year and caused our hearts to greatly rejoice." On the second day of the session, Mr. Charles Miller was ordained as pastor of the Clifford Church by the ministers of the Association, agreeable to the request of that church of which he was a constituent member and licensed minister. Rev. Zelotes Grenell

preached the sermon from Ps. 126 : 6, "in which," according to the minutes, "the office, work, and encouragement of the Gospel minister, were particularly delineated."

The Twenty-fourth Anniversary was held at Bethany, September 7th and 8th, 1831. Introductory sermon by William House; John Miller moderator, and Charles H. Hubbard clerk. Reported 77 baptisms and 873 communicants. At this session the Lenox and Lebanon Churches were admitted into the Association, which now embraced twelve churches and held correspondence with as many sister Associations, located in this and an adjoining State. The influence of this fraternal correspondence, was of essential service in the comparative absence of religious papers and periodicals. It was the means of attracting a number of ministers from various places, to the annual meetings of this body, whose presence and preaching were a fruitful source of interest and instruction. They usually "came in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel" and were uniformly happy to "impart some spiritual gift," or encourage some Christian grace. The minutes, too, of these corresponding bodies, brought "Christian salutations" from distant brethren, and frequently contained various and valuable suggestions. At this meeting the Committee on these minutes, reported "that they find an untiring zeal manifested by our brethren for the spread of the Gospel among the destitute, and would also recommend the same to our brethren of this body."

The Twenty-fifth Anniversary was held at Blakely, Sept. 5th and 6th, 1832. Introductory sermon by Daniel Robinson; John Miller moderator, and Charles

H. Hubbard clerk. Reported 36 baptisms and 924 communicants. The Canaan—now Clinton—and Nicholson—now Benton—churches were received into the Association at this session, and the painful and protracted difficulty in Mt. Pleasant Church, was reported so far adjusted as to encourage the hope of future peace and prosperity in that distracted and divided body. A small collection was taken to aid in completing the house of worship in which the Association was convened, and a commendable sympathy was also manifested with such churches of the body as were destitute of settled pastors and stated preaching, and ministering brethren were requested to make them an occasional visit and furnish them with a gratuitous supply. Various religious papers and periodicals were introduced to the notice of the Association and recommended to the patronage of the churches, as a medium of “important and useful information.”

The Twenty-sixth Anniversary was held at Starrucca, September 4th and 5th, 1833. Introductory sermon by John Miller ; Charles H. Hubbard moderator ; John Miller and Sheldon Norton clerks. Reported 152 baptisms and 1122 communicants. At this session the Welsh Baptist Church of Carbondale was received into the Association, which now embraced fifteen churches, with twelve ordained and four licensed ministers. The churches having become comparatively numerous and being so widely scattered, it was proposed by the Abington Church to divide the Association. This proposition, after being reported on by a committee, was submitted to the decision of the churches. It was revived at the next session, discussed, and finally postponed to the fol-

lowing year, when the Association voted "that it is inexpedient to divide at present," since which this question has not been seriously entertained.

This session was fully attended and seems to have been one of especial interest, from the hopeful conversion of many of the impenitent and healthy growth of most of the churches during the current year. It was, however, a season of peculiar anxiety from the sensible presence of the leaven of Antinomianism which had penetrated and pervaded the lifeless membership of some of the churches. Necessary measures were initiated to cast out this leaven and encourage a missionary spirit, by diffusing religious intelligence and promoting personal effort in the cause of missions, Bible distribution, Sabbath Schools, and kindred enterprises.

The Twenty-seventh Anniversary was held at Abington, September 3d, 4th and 5th, 1834. Introductory sermon by Henry Curtis; John Miller moderator, and Sheldon Norton clerk. Reported 67 baptisms and 1081 communicants. The Herrick Church was added to the Association at this session, and Rufus Grennell was requested to continue to act as Treasurer. A number of ministers from abroad were present, adding much to the interest of the occasion, by their fraternal advice and faithful sermons. Near the close of the session a series of resolutions on various moral and missionary subjects, were offered and after being fully discussed, were adopted, urging upon the members of the different churches the duty of earnest effort and enlarged benevolence.

The Twenty-eighth Anniversary was held at Damascus, September 2d, 3d and 4th, 1835. Introductory sermon by John Miller, who was moderator; Smith

Bixby and G. V. Walling clerks. Reported 19 baptisms and 1009 communicants. At this session the church at Paupack Eddy was admitted into the Association, increasing the number of its churches to seventeen. The usual business of the body was harmoniously transacted, and useful sermons were preached by a number of brethren at home and from abroad. The session seems to have been one of anxious solicitude for the peace and purity of the churches. The recent death of Rev. Elijah Peck, one of the pioneer pastors of the Association, was noticed in the following appropriate preamble and resolution: "Whereas, it has pleased an all-wise Providence during the past year to remove from us by death, our beloved Bro. Elijah Peck, who has long been a member of this Association; therefore resolved, that it is our Christian duty to patiently submit to the afflictive stroke which has severed him from his family and friends, and closed his labors in the church militant."

The Twenty-ninth Anniversary was held at Clifford, September 7th and 8th, 1836. Introductory sermon by Henry Curtis; John Miller moderator; Smith Bixby and Rufus Grennell clerks. Reported 38 baptisms and 975 communicants. At this session some three ministers were added to the body, and a fraternal correspondence was opened with the Bradford Association. Rev. Henry Curtis was appointed Corresponding Secretary of the Association, and notice was given in the minutes of the several quarterly meetings of the "Baptist Conference of Ministers and Deacons," to be held as follows, viz., in October, at Montrose; in January, at Bethany; and in July, at Middletown, Susquehanna County. The

one in April was "dispensed with on account of the general meeting to be held in Philadelphia about the same time."

The following resolutions will indicate the prompt approval by the Association of the proposed organization of the Pennsylvania Baptist Convention, and provisional formation of the American and Foreign Bible Society. "Resolved, that we cordially approve the resolution adopted by the Baptist Missionary Association of Pennsylvania, respecting the organization of a State Convention." "Whereas, the American Bible Society, by its decision in February last, has virtually excluded us from all participation in its funds so far as foreign distribution is concerned, unless we conceal a part of the counsel of God, relative to the ordinance of baptism, and whereas the providence of God has opened a great and effectual door whereby it becomes the duty and privilege of the Baptist denomination to supply more than one-half of the population of the globe; therefore resolved, that we form a Bible Society auxiliary to the American and Foreign Bible Society, and earnestly recommend to all our brethren to give immediate and efficient aid to its funds." Accordingly the "Abington Baptist Association Bible Society, auxiliary to the American and Foreign Bible Society," was formed, having for its "sole object the promotion of the wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures faithfully translated." This Society was sustained within the bounds of the Association until the Autumn of 1841, when it was formally disbanded, leaving "the funds for this object to be raised in the same manner as those for other benevolent societies."

The Thirtieth Anniversary was held at Bethany, September 6th and 7th, 1837. Introductory sermon by John Miller, who was moderator; Rufus Grennell and James Mumford clerks. Reported 28 baptisms and 981 communicants.

This session was scarcely distinguished from preceding ones in its business transactions and devotional exercises. It was, however, characterized as pre-eminently "pleasant and interesting," yet the general joy was somewhat chastened by the recollection of the recent deaths of two esteemed ministers. The subdued grief and Christian sympathy of the Association were expressed in the following recommendation, viz., "We recommend affectionate condolence with our sister church at Damascus, in the severe loss which they have sustained in the death of their devoted pastor, Eld. Smith Bixby, and also in the death of Eld. Enoch Owen; and that the churches in this body be requested to present their earnest prayer to the Great Disposer of events, still to supply not only Damascus, but all our destitute churches with pastors, after His own heart." The experience of the current year is perhaps fairly represented in the following extract from the corresponding letter prepared by Rev. Levi Baldwin, viz., "Many of the churches of this body are destitute of pastors. The past year has not been marked by the outpouring of the Spirit of God; still some drops of mercy have fallen notwithstanding our unworthiness, and the hearts of many of the saints have at times been sweetly refreshed."

This decade was distinguished by frequent struggles, resulting at least in the partial triumphs of various

reformatory measures and movements. It was marked by peculiar zeal in the temperance reform. Until this period most of the churches occupied exceedingly low ground on the temperance question. Moderate drinking was patiently tolerated, while manifest drunkenness was promptly disciplined. It was, however, found that tippling uniformly tended to excess, and that to escape the one, the other must be abandoned. This subject, agitated for a time in the churches, was finally introduced into the Association for friendly discussion and fraternal advice. At the session of 1829, the following resolution in substance was discussed and adopted: "That we consider the time to have arrived when every Christian can most essentially subserve the cause of humanity by making every consistent effort for the promotion of temperance, and that it be recommended to all the members of the different churches of this body, to exert all their influence to abolish the custom of using ardent spirits, except for medical purposes." Also, at the session of 1833, the following resolution was unanimously adopted: "That we continue to urge upon all the members of the churches of this Association the increasing importance of abstaining from the sale and use of ardent spirits as a drink, and we hope that our friends will be everywhere active and useful in promoting the cause of temperance reform." At the session of 1834, this resolution slightly modified was again adopted. At the session of 1835, '36, and '37, the following rational opinion was expressed and published in the minutes: "That in the opinion of this Association, the practice of making, vending or using ardent spirits as a drink, is morally wrong and ought to be perseveringly discountenanced by every Christian."

This decade was also marred by doctrinal discussions. At an early period the leaven of Antinomianism, had been gradually infused into some of the churches, silently working and diffusing itself until some two ministers and numerous members were brought under its blighting sway. This sentiment had remained concealed behind the "doctrines of grace," until it was drawn from its ambush in its zeal to oppose various benevolent efforts and organizations. A number of churches had suffered greatly from its chilling influence; it was also the means of dividing some and distracting others. In 1834, upwards of 40 members who had embraced this sentiment, left the Greenfield, and in 1836, some 50 withdrew from the Abington Church. It came near rending the Clifford and ruining the Palmyra Church.

This sentiment, however, met with little favor in the Association as a body. At its session of 1833, the following resolution was adopted: "That we utterly disclaim any responsibility for the opposition which has been manifested by those who profess to be Baptists, in periodical publications or otherwise, to the cause of missions—to the publication and distribution of the Bible—to the Bible instruction of the young in Sabbath Schools, and to other benevolent efforts and Christian charities." In 1835, the Association entreated the brethren not to encourage the circulation of the "Signs of the Times," on account of its anti-mission teachings and tendencies, and also resolved to discontinue the customary correspondence with the Chemung and Warwick Associations for similar reasons. At the same session the following preamble and resolution were

adopted: "Whereas, some of our brethren belonging to several churches within the Association, appear to entertain conscientious doubts of the propriety of the course which the Association is taking to promote the spread of the Gospel among the destitute according as the Lord hath prospered us; therefore resolved, that the Association do hereby assure them of our affectionate regard; of our steadfast adherence to the principles of the doctrines of Christ as set forth in our confession of faith, and of our sincere desire that they may come up with us to the help of the Lord against the mighty; and we entreat them to solemnly inquire whether the opposition and bitterness manifested by some against missionary operations, do not arise chiefly from covetousness or a want of ardent piety, and correct views of moral and religious obligation." This was followed in 1836, by the publication of a pamphlet written by Rev. Henry Curtis, and entitled "THE TRUTH AS IT IS," in which the previous course of the Association on the subject of missions, is faithfully reviewed and ably vindicated from the charge of anti-mission tendencies. This anxiety and agitation of doctrinal questions and religious obligations, was followed by a clearer sense of personal responsibility and more vigorous measures for the promotion of the various objects of Christian benevolence. The cause of Foreign Missions, Home Evangelization, Ministerial Education, Bible Distribution and Sabbath School Instruction, enlisted the sympathies and developed the resources of the Association.

FOURTH DECADE, 1837—1847.

At the opening of this decade the Association embraced seventeen churches and seven ordained and four licensed ministers, and upwards of a thousand communicants. The Abington Church numbered nearly three hundred, and the Bethany not far from a hundred and fifty members. Each of the remaining churches, reported less than a hundred, ten of which fell below fifty communicants. From these statistics, it will be seen that the laborers were unequal to the harvest; some of the churches were favored with settled pastors, while others enjoyed but an occasional supply. In some cases one minister preached for two or more churches. It will also be noticed that Rev. Henry Curtis acted as moderator of the Association during this entire decade.

The Thirty-first Anniversary was held at Abington, September 5th and 6th, 1838. Introductory sermon by Henry Curtis, who was moderator; James Mumford and Rufus Grennell clerks. Reported 123 baptisms and 1080 communicants.

The business of this session was harmoniously transacted, and a series of resolutions were adopted, recommending various moral reforms and missionary organizations, to the confidence and support of the churches. Among these was the following resolution copied from the minutes of the previous year: "That we recommend to the churches in this Association to take into prayerful consideration the subject of slavery and its effects on the church and the world, that they may learn their duty on this important subject." The following extract from the corresponding letter of this year will indicate.

the general prosperity of the Association during that period: "We still have some reason to rejoice that God has visited some of our churches during the past with year a blessed revival of his work. Sinners have been made to weep for their sins; saints have rejoiced in holy solemnity while precious souls have been born into the Kingdom, and we believe that the seal of God's eternal and electing love has made its impression on many hearts."

The Thirty-second Anniversary was held at Damascus, September 4th and 5th, 1839. Introductory sermon by John Miller; Henry Curtis moderator; Isaac P. Olmstead and Rufus Grennell clerks. Reported 129 baptisms and 1195 communicants.

This session was scarcely distinguished from that of the previous year, the same series of resolutions being adopted, excepting that on slavery. In place of the usual Circular Letter, the Constitution of the Association, Rules of Order and Articles of Faith, were published in the minutes of this year. The following extract from the corresponding letter of this session will sufficiently indicate the general prosperity of the churches: "The letters sent from the several branches of our Zion, present a scene of varied character, but of solemn and gratifying interest. Some of the churches are rejoicing in abundant harvests and in the smiles of uncommon prosperity; others are thirsting for like visitations, yet none we trust are wholly destitute of the precious fruits of 'righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.' The general aspect of the cause of Christ in this region is cheering, and we are in duty bound to thank God and take courage. The wants and

woes of a world lying in wickedness, cease not to attract our attention, nor does the sight of our eyes fail to affect our hearts. Indeed, the crisis is such in the providence of God, as to imperatively demand the prayerful and persevering efforts of all his people."

The Thirty-third Anniversary was held at Clifford, September 2d and 3d, 1840. Introductory sermon by Henry Curtis, who was moderator; D. F. Leach and John Miller clerks. Reported 188 baptisms and 1397 communicants.

At this session the Ten Mile River Church was received into the Association. An unusually large number of ministers were present from corresponding bodies, who took an interesting part in the public exercises. Besides the usual resolutions, the following was adopted: "Whereas, in our opinion the ordinary mode of Independence Celebrations in many instances endangers life; is destructive of good morals, and lays strong temptations to evil in the way of the rising generation; therefore, resolved, that we recommend that Christians especially encourage, by their example and influence, the observance of the 4th of July in the promotion of benevolent objects, such as the Sabbath School or temperance cause, or that the time be spent in the worship of God." The current year seems to have been one of much encouragement. "The past season," as the record runs, "has been one of uncommon prosperity. 'The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.' "

The Thirty-fourth Anniversary was held at Bethany, September 1st and 2d, 1841. Introductory sermon by John Miller; Henry Curtis moderator; D. F. Leach

and Lora W. Stone clerks. Reported 112 baptisms and 1468 communicants.

At this session the Eaton Church was dismissed to unite with the Bridgewater Association. "An interesting letter" was received from the Philadelphia Association, and a vote was passed to respond to the same, "as near as may be, in the spirit of that communication," and the Secretary was also instructed "to correspond with sister Associations by writing to them individually." The custom, however, of printing a corresponding letter in the minutes, was not discontinued; the letter of this session furnishes the following as to the state of religion in the churches: "Our meeting has been one of lively interest, but has discovered to us that we have no time to sleep, for the enemy of all righteousness has seemed to take advantage of the peculiarly trying times which we have experienced in worldly affairs during the past year; and while we have been busy here and there, he has industriously and, alas! too effectually sown the seeds of apathy and spiritual sloth among the churches. Some, however, have come up with sheaves of rejoicing and have made our hearts glad with the recital of what God has done in their midst." The collections at this meeting were unusually liberal; that for Foreign Missions amounting to \$25, and for Domestic Missions, being \$37.66; this latter was ordered to be divided between the New York and Pennsylvania Baptist Conventions. It was also voted "that we highly approve of the labors of the missionaries of these societies in this Association, and that our Corresponding Secretary be authorized to request their re-appointment."

The Thirty-fifth Anniversary was held at West Abington, September 7th and 8th, 1842. Introductory sermon by Henry Curtis, who was moderator; Virgil Grennell and E. K. Norton clerks. Reported 162 baptisms and 1512 communicants.

The Honesdale and Second Clifford Churches were admitted at this session. An unusual number of ministers from abroad were present. The following represented the Bridgewater Association, viz., Revs. Davis Dimock, Jesse B. Worden, Albert L. Post, William K. Mott, Davis D. Gray and Jonathan Melvin. The last named was a grand-son of the eccentric John Leland. Rev William Shadrach represented the Pennsylvania Baptist Convention, and presented his "Penny Plan," which was endorsed by the Association and recommended to the churches, but it seems to have early proved a failure in practice as every such plan must of necessity. The corresponding letter of this year contains the following cheerful account of the meeting and the state of the cause: "Our present session has been delightfully harmonious and of unusual interest. It has been a feast of fat things. The missionary spirit, we hope, has received a new impulse, and for the year to come, notwithstanding the pressure of the times, we hope to do more in advancing the Kingdom of Christ and for the circulation of the Word of life among the destitute than we have done heretofore. The year past has been distinguished by very special manifestations of Divine favor to some of the churches connected with us, and from what we learn of the spiritual condition of others, as presented in their annual epistles, we feel to thank God and take courage."

The Thirty-sixth Anniversary was held at Damascus, September 6th and 7th, 1843. Introductory sermon by D. F. Leach; Henry Curtis moderator; E. K. Norton and L. L. Demming clerks. Reported 102 baptisms and 1613 communicants.

At this meeting the Blakely Church was received into the body, and a correspondence opened with the Wyoming Association, recently set off from the Bridge-water. Until this time the pastors of the churches had usually been designated as "Elders," but the clerks of this year, took the liberty of publishing them as "Bishops." At the next Anniversary of the Association the following resolution was offered and ordered to lie over until the next session: "Resolved, that in printing the statistics of our Association, the pastors of the churches be designated as Bishops, that being their scriptural appellation." This harmless innovation, however, seems to have failed to receive the sanction of the Association and soon disappears from the minutes. It may be well to observe that either term is scriptural and appropriate as applied to the pastor of a church or minister of the Gospel. These terms are employed interchangeably in the following passages: Acts 20: 17, 28. Titus 1: 5, 7, and 1 Peter 5: 1, 2. As much cannot be said of the term Reverend, now in common use, since it occurs but once in the sacred Scriptures and then is applied to the Supremé Being. "Holy and Reverend is His name." Ps. 111: 9. Many have doubted the propriety of applying this title to a mere creature. Its use, however, has become quite general and may be admissable when it is employed merely as a convenient ministerial designation. The Christian law is, "Esteem

them very highly in love, for their works' sake." This title may merely express that esteem; if it does more, it is certainly inappropriate.

The Thirty-seventh Anniversary was held at Clifford, September 4th and 5th, 1844. Introductory sermon by Henry Curtis, who was moderator; E. K. Norton and Austin Davenport clerks.

The Welsh Baptist Church, of Carbondale, having united with Oneida Welsh Association, was dropped at this session, and a correspondence was opened with that and the Tioga Association. The interest of this meeting was greatly increased by the presence and preaching of Rev. Archibald Maclay, of New York, Agent of the American and Foreign Bible Society. A collection of upwards of thirty dollars was taken in aid of this Society, and the following resolution passed: "Resolved, that the Association entertain grateful feelings for the attendance at our session, of our venerable father in the Bible cause, Rev. Archibald Maclay, D. D., and we earnestly and affectionately urge the American and Foreign Bible Society to send an annual delegation to our Association." The Bible Society of North-Eastern Pennsylvania, organized at the house of Alvinzy Gardener, in Abington, December 22, 1843, changed its name and constitution at this session, and was henceforth known as "the Lackawanna and Lackawaxen Bible Society," auxiliary to the American and Foreign Bible Society, having for "its object to raise funds for supplying the destitute in our own neighborhood, with the Word of God and to aid the Parent Society in its efforts to circulate the Bible throughout the world." This

Society has been among the most permanent and prosperous auxiliaries of the Parent Society.

The Thirty-eighth Anniversary was held at Honesdale, September 3d and 4th, 1845. Introductory sermon by John Miller ; Henry Curtis moderator ; E. K. Norton and Austin Davenport clerks. Reported 25 baptisms and 1521 communicants.

On account of the languishing condition of religion in the churches, the Association passed the following resolution: "In view of the lack of spiritual zeal in the churches of this Association, we devote one hour to-morrow morning to devotional exercises." The morning came and the hour was occupied in devotional exercises. Fervent prayer was offered by brethren M. M. Everets, Rial Tower, Nathan Hand, James P. Stalbird and John Baldwin. The Association subsequently resolved, "That we recommend to the churches of this Association, to hold a meeting of fasting, humiliation and prayer, on the first Thursday in November next, for the purpose of calling upon God, that he may forgive the sins of his people, and revive his work in the hearts of all that profess to love his name, and implore his mercy in behalf of sinners." Near the close of the session, "a committee of six was appointed to propose such amendments to the present constitution of this Association as they may think necessary, to be published, together with said constitution, in the minutes of the current year ; and that the churches belonging to this body be and hereby are requested to instruct their delegates or say in their letters to the next session of this Association, whether they are in favor or against such amendments." The above committee consisting of

brethren Virgil Grennell, Henry Curtis, Rufus Grennell, Davis D. Gray, Austin Davenport and E. K. Norton, prepared an amended constitution which was published in the minutes of this year, together with the constitution in force, but it did not receive the sanction of two-thirds of the churches, and consequently was not adopted.

The Thirty-ninth Anniversary was held at Abington, September 2d and 3d, 1846. Introductory sermon by Alexander Smith; Henry Curtis moderator; Silas Finn and Lora W. Stone clerks. Reported 17 baptisms and 1517 communicants.

The business of this session embraced few subjects out of the usual routine. A correspondence was opened with the Clarion Association, and the Mt. Pleasant and Lebanon Churches having united, their names stand together in the minutes, each church still having its own clerk. The following confession and apology is embraced in the corresponding letter of this year: "In connection with our sister Associations, we have to mourn over our apathy and want of Christian energy. We have reason for deep humiliation before God, in view of our coldness and want of primitive zeal in our Master's cause; the result of which has been, that few have been added to our number by baptism. It may be proper to say that we still hold the doctrines common to our denomination. We feel an interest in the Mission and Bible cause, and others of a kindred nature. We welcome your delegates now present and hope we may together 'contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,' and be found humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God, that Zion may shine forth in all her pristine glory."

The Fortieth Anniversary was held at Clinton, September 1st and 2d, 1847. Introductory sermon by M. M. Everets; Henry Curtis moderator; E. K. Norton and Virgil Grennell clerks. Reported 93 baptisms and 1433 communicants.

The Callicoon Church was added to the body at this session, and the Abington Church reported that they had revised their records and thus "account for the discrepancy between their returns of this and the previous year." It would seem that the revision had resulted in eliminating some 76 nominal members. This fact will also account, in part, for the apparent diminution in the numerical strength of the Association. The "*Christian Chronicle*," a denominational paper established at Philadelphia, in the Autumn of 1845, was endorsed in the following sensible resolution: "That we regard the *Christian Chronicle* among the first class of religious papers, as a channel of valuable information, and would recommend that every member of our churches take, pay for and read it." Rev. Eugenio Kincaid, returned Missionary, was present at this session, and by his graphic delineations of missionary life and labor, added much to the interest of the occasion. He delivered an address on the subject of Foreign Missions, and preached in behalf of the American and Foreign Bible Society. He also seems to have represented the University recently located at Lewisburg, under the direction of Prof. S. W. Taylor, A. M. The following was presented by Mr. Kincaid, and published in the minutes of this year: "The Preparatory Department of this Institution, has been for one year in successful operation. During the Winter session, upwards of 50

pupils were present, and more than 70 during the Summer session, just closed. Several of the students are prepared to enter the Freshman Class of the Collegiate Department this Fall, and it is expected that a Sophomore Class will also be organized at the opening of the coming session."

The former part of this decade was distinguished by numerous revivals. During the first six years, nearly a thousand converts were added to the several churches, twelve of which received the most numerous accessions. One hundred and thirteen were added to the church at Damascus; ninety-three to that at Greenfield, and ninety-one to the Abington Church. It would, perhaps, be difficult to point out the various means and instrumentalities employed and blessed in promoting this gracious work. It may, however, be safe to name the following as among the more obvious and important. Protracted meetings were frequently held and so conducted as to greatly promote this gracious work. In the minutes of 1837 and '38, the following resolution was conspicuously published: "That we recommend to each of the churches in this Association, to hold a Protracted Meeting during the year, in humble dependence on God for his blessing, and that judicious and faithful brethren in sister churches be invited to attend." This recommendation of the Association was, doubtless, acted upon by many of the churches, resulting in the hopeful conversion of sinners and the comfort and encouragement of saints. The pastors of the churches belonging to the Association, did most of the preaching at these meetings. Among the more earnest and successful of these, were Revs. Henry Curtis, James Clark,

John Miller, William K. Mott, Joseph Curren, D. F. Leach, Silas Finn, and Daniel E. Bowen. The other pastors, however, were not idle and did not labor in vain on their respective fields. More or less prosperity attended most of the churches during this favored period. How many pious souls among the private members, wrestled in prayer in their closets, at the domestic altar and in the assemblies of the saints, may not now be known or here recorded, but their record is on high and will not be forgotten when God makes up his jewels and crowns his redeemed.

The latter portion of this decade was marked by general coldness and declension. During the last four years, comparatively few converts were added to the churches. The vision tarried and the blessing was withheld. The pious mourned and the wicked triumphed. The causes of this state of things may not now be traced out or treasured up for our aid and admonition. It does not seem that they were even then fully comprehended. The churches complained, in their annual letters, of their lack of faith and lamented their want of energy and earnestness. The Association passed resolutions deploring the general coldness, and in 1846 recommended "the first Wednesday of December as a day of fasting and most devout and fervent prayer to Almighty God for the outpouring of his Spirit upon our churches, and the revival of his work in our hearts." The corresponding letters of these years also breathe out confessions and complaints, and fill the air with longings and lamentations. The closing year, however, brings some tokens of good, and a more cheerful spirit pervades and animates the body.

During this decade a persevering effort was made to diffuse religious knowledge among the churches and develop an intelligent spirit of missionary zeal and Christian benevolence among the membership. In 1838, the first year of this decade, the following resolutions, copied in part from the minutes of the previous year, were presented by a committee consisting of Revs. John Miller, William Frear and Henry Curtis, and passed by the Association: "Resolved, that this Association considers it very important that religious intelligence be more generally diffused among the churches; we do, therefore, most earnestly recommend to our brethren that they take, read and pay for a religious periodical, such as the *Gospel Witness* of New York; the *Baptist Register* of Utica; the *Baptist Record* of Philadelphia; and the *American Baptist Magazine*." "Resolved, that the ministers of this Association be requested to preach on the subject of the Bible cause, once or more during the year, and take up a collection for that object. Also, that we warmly recommend to the members of our churches, a continued and increasing attention to the direct scriptural instruction of the young, in the family circle, Bible Classes and Sabbath Schools." Another resolution requests the churches to provide subscription books, with a separate column for each of the following objects, viz., Foreign and Domestic Missions, American and Foreign Bible Society, Sabbath Schools, Tract Distribution, and Ministerial Education. These or similar resolutions, were passed and published from year to year, and the subjects they embraced were constantly kept before the churches and earnestly urged upon the attention of their members. This persistent

effort was not altogether fruitless, but tended to form correct views of duty and foster an enlarged and enlightened benevolence. The amount raised during this period for various benevolent objects, fully justifies this favorable conclusion.

FIFTH DECADE, 1847—1857.

The Association, at the commencement of this decade, embraced nine ordained and three licensed ministers laboring for twenty churches, eight of which were situated in Wayne County, six in Luzerne, four in Susquehanna and the remaining two on the east of the Delaware in the State of New York. The region covered by the Association, embraced the northern portion of Luzerne County, most of Wayne and the eastern part of Susquehanna. This tract is nicely balanced across the Moosic mountain, extending down its north-eastern slope to the Delaware river and its south-western to the Susquehanna. It is variegated by rugged hills and rich valleys, beautiful forests and cultivated fields; it is striped by river and lake and bound together by railway and canal—the outlets of iron and coal but the inlets of error and crime; it is dotted over with the bustling city, busy village and beautiful hamlet, teeming with a dense, enterprising population, as various in creed and character as in origin and language. The farming, mining and other interests have invited a heterogeneous population, composed chiefly of the shrewd Yankee, and slow German; the stern Scotchman and impulsive Welshman, with the passionate and prejudiced Irishman. On such a field, among such a people, the progress of the cause must necessarily be slow and its prosperity somewhat limited. The scene of its most signal triumphs, has been among the American population in the farming districts. A foothold, however, has been gained in most of the towns and villages, the centres of influence and nationalities.

The Forty-first Anniversary was held at Blakely, September 6th and 7th, 1848. Introductory sermon by Henry Curtis; M. M. Everets moderator; H. D. Walker and Silas Finn clerks. Reported 21 baptisms and 1423 communicants.

The Berean Church of Carbondale, was received into the Association at this meeting, and the request of the Second Clifford Church to be "dropped from the minutes," was refused as unconstitutional. The state of religion in the churches was not the most encouraging, yet the present session seems to have been one of much interest, furnishing, however, few salient points. It was voted, "that in view of the facilities afforded for the education of our sons and daughters in a school of established reputation within the limits of our Association, we do most cordially recommend to our brethren and to parents generally, to patronize the Madison Academy, located at Abington Centre, under the care of its worthy principal, H. D. Walker." Besides the usual vote of thanks "to the members and friends of the Blakely Church for the kind and hospitable manner in which they have entertained us," it was also resolved, "that the thanks of this Association be presented to Mr. and Mrs. Lillibridge for their generous hospitality in entertaining the clergy during the session."

The Forty-second Anniversary was held at Bethany, September 5th and 6th, 1849. Introductory sermon by T. O. Judd; Silas Finn moderator; A. O. Hanford and Austin Davenport clerks. Reported 19 baptisms and 1396 communicants.

The request of the Covington and "First" Lebanon

churches for admission into the Association, was granted. A committee consisting of Revs. Henry Curtis and John Miller, was appointed to visit the Herrick and Second Clifford churches and report at the next session. During the current year upwards of five hundred dollars were raised by the several churches for benevolent objects, distributed as follows, viz., for Foreign Missions, \$62.30; Pennsylvania Baptist Convention, \$243.96; New York Baptist Convention, \$6.00; Lackawanna and Lackawaxen Bible Society, \$171.55; and for printing Minutes, \$19.51, making a total of \$503.34. This perhaps is about the average yearly amount for this decade. The prevalent low state of religion in the churches seems also to have occupied the earnest attention of the Association. The Circular Letter of this year, was an able discussion of the causes of the low state of Zion, written by Rev. Henry Curtis, in which he names the following as among the more obvious causes of this state of things, viz., a spirit of worldly-mindedness—the neglect to cultivate personal and family religion—the too common neglect of covenant obligations—the want of co-operation between churches and pastors, and finally the want of fervent and effectual prayer for a greater measure of the Holy Spirit.

The Forty-third Anniversary was held at Abington, September 4th and 5th, 1850. Introductory sermon by Henry Curtis, who was moderator; Lora W. Stone and William A. Miller clerks. Reported 56 baptisms and 1402 communicants.

The Newton and Hyde Park Churches were added to the body at this session. The record of business

presents little of especial interest. Near the close of the meeting, Rev. Andrew Hopper reported the proceedings of a missionary convention, held at Clinton, in the preceding February; "whereupon it was ordered that the resolutions, then and there adopted, be incorporated in the minutes, for the purpose of directing the attention of all the churches more fully to the necessity of supplying destitute neighborhoods with the preached Gospel." The following is the substance of the resolutions to which allusion is made: "That each church should seek to promote personal piety and mutual peace among its members, and endeavor to sustain an efficient pastor, as best adapted to a healthy growth, and permanent prosperity. Also that the Association be requested to appoint a standing missionary committee, whose duty it shall be to correspond with the Pennsylvania Baptist Convention, with a view to the appointment of suitable men to labor on prominent and promising fields within our borders; and that it be recommended to brethren in destitute churches, and neighborhoods to correspond with said committee, stating their condition and the character of the field they wish cultivated, and also the probable amount they can raise for the support of preaching." The above suggestion was acted upon and six brethren were appointed as a missionary committee—this committee expired with the close of this decade.

The Forty-fourth Anniversary was held at Ten Mile River, September 3d and 4th, 1851. Introductory sermon by John Miller; Andrew Hopper moderator; Lewis L. Still and W. G. Baker clerks. Reported 99 baptisms and 1606 communicants.

At this session the Berlin, Union, Welsh of Carbon-dale, and West Abington churches were received into the Association, and the Tioga, Ontario, Madison, Cortland and Welsh Oneida Associations were "ordered to be stricken from our list of correspondents." The Constitution, Rules of Order and Articles of Faith of the body, were re-produced in the minutes of this year. A full supply of Agents, a painful necessity of the times, was present at this meeting; Revs. J. L. Richmond, William Rees and Gilbert S. Bailey, representing the Pennsylvania Baptist Convention, American and Foreign Bible Society, and American Baptist Home Mission Society.

The following resolution, passed by the Association, will suitably mark the sudden destruction of the first Clinton meeting-house. "In the providence of God, the late destructive whirlwind which swept over this section of country, having caused the entire destruction of the Baptist meeting-house in Clinton, and leaving the church and congregation without a suitable place of worship by reason of this calamitous event; therefore, in order to sympathize with our brethren in their distress and afford them aid in rebuilding, we earnestly recommend their case to the prayers and liberality of the churches of this Association."

The Forty-fifth Anniversary was held at West Abington, September 1st and 2d, 1852. Introductory sermon by C. C. Williams, who was moderator, and Andrew Hopper clerk. Reported 149 baptisms and 1661 communicants.

The Ashland and Second Damascus Churches were admitted into the body at this session. After the letter

from the latter church was read, the Association, at the request of the moderator, who had been similarly remembered at the previous meeting, "united with Rev. Rial Tower in solemn prayer to God on behalf of our brother, Rev. John T. Mitchell and his family, because of the severe afflictions visited upon them in the form of sickness and bereavement." Besides passing the usual resolutions on various benevolent organizations, the Association endorsed the "Maine Law" in the following somewhat wordy though sufficiently pointed resolution: "That this Association believe the Maine Liquor Law to be based on the principles of right, humanity, and religion, and like the law of God, lays the axe at the root of the tree and places the responsibility of the evils and woes of intemperance where it justly belongs, and like the blessed Gospel, throws into the waters that have been rolling a tide of bitterness and desolation, of temporal and eternal death over the nations, an element by which they are sweetened and made the streams of life, gladness and salvation. Also that we recommend to each of the churches composing this body, to appoint one or more of its members whose duty it shall be to make an effort to secure the names of the entire membership, as petitioners to our Legislature, praying them to enact a similar law at their next session." If this prayer was made, it was never answered, as men still continue to put the bottle to their neighbor's lips according to law.

The Forty-sixth Anniversary was held at Honesdale, September 7th and 8th, 1853. Introductory sermon by Wm. K. Mott, who was moderator; E. L. Bailey and

Homer Grennell clerks. Reported 154 baptisms and 1661 communicants.

The Mt. Bethel Church was added to the body at this session, and a committee of three was appointed to collect the necessary facts and documents, and compile and publish a comprehensive history of the churches composing the Association. But few agents or ministers from abroad were in attendance. Rev. Davis Dimock, of Montrose, however, was present and on the second day of the session, preached an interesting sermon from Ps. 32: 1, 2, on The Blessedness of Imputed Righteousness. The occasion was one of much interest to the ministers and messengers present, and must have been no less so to this venerable father in Israel. He had been present at the organization of the Association, nearly a half century since, when it embraced but three feeble churches, and as many pastors, together with some 140 communicants. It now embraced 27 churches, 18 ordained and 8 licensed ministers, with a membership approaching two thousand. The comparison was interesting and the contrast encouraging. He had witnessed the feeble infancy of the Association, and watched its gradual growth. He now saw it in its mature years and manly strength. To one who had devoted the efforts of a long life to the cause of Christ, such a sight and retrospect must have been of thrilling interest and an occasion of devout gratitude.

The Forty-seventh Anniversary was held at Benton, September 6th and 7th, 1854. Introductory sermon by Sanford Leach; C. A. Fox moderator; E. L. Bailey and A. O. Hanford clerks. Reported 136 baptisms and 1696 communicants.

The Salem and Hollisterville Churches were admitted as members of the body, and the Callicoon Church was dismissed to unite with another Association. Rev. Zelotes Grenell was present for the first time as a minister of this body, having recently settled as pastor of the Honesdale Church. He had, however, long taken a deep interest in the prosperity and progress of the Association, having attended most of its anniversaries from 1818, and by his presence and preaching adding much to the profit and pleasure of such occasions. The body, though moderately anti-slavery, had not, up to this period, expressed a decided opinion on that exciting question. At this session, however, the Association passed the following brief but comprehensive resolution, which was published in the minutes of this and two subsequent years: "Resolved, that we believe the system of Slavery as it exists in the United States, to be a great and growing evil, and that we pledge our interest and influence to prevent its extension and promote its extinction." To this was added in 1856, "And that the time for *action* has now come."

The Forty-eighth Anniversary was held at Hollisterville, September 5th and 6th, 1855. Introductory sermon by E. L. Bailey; Henry Curtis moderator; E. L. Bailey and Homer Grennell clerks. Reported 98 baptisms and 1772 communicants.

The Aldenville Church was admitted into the Association at this session. On the evening of the first day, the usual order of business was agreeably varied by the ordination of Messrs. James Waite and William Potter as Deacons of Hollisterville Church, by the fol-

lowing appropriate services, viz., sermon by Rev. Wm. K. Mott; charge to the candidates by Rev. Henry Curtis; consecrating prayer by the preacher, and imposition of hands with other ministers; address to the church by Rev. D. C. Haynes, agent of the American Baptist Publication Society. On the second day, in addition to the usual resolutions, the two following were passed; the one correcting a casual evil; the other indicating a sensible necessity: "That we recommend to the churches of this body, in receiving ministers from other denominations and in ordaining brethren of our own, to use the utmost care to take no step in such matters, without freely consulting neighboring sister churches according to the usages of the denomination." Also, "That we affectionately and earnestly request the churches of this Association, to set apart the first Monday of January next, as a day of solemn prayer and fasting, and to implore the reviving influences of God's Holy Spirit to rest upon the churches."

The Forty-ninth Anniversary was held at Abington, September 3d and 4th, 1856. Introductory sermon by Henry Curtis; E. K. Norton moderator; E. L. Bailey and Homer Grennell clerks. Reported 98 baptisms and 1661 communicants.

The opening sermon of this session was historical, embracing brief notices of various early ministers, the Missionary character and the present duties and necessities of the Association. The discourse was listened to with much interest, and by request was published in the *Christian Chronicle* of Philadelphia. The Abington Valley Church united with the Association, and the Welsh Church of Carbondale "stood not on the

manner of its going, but went at once," leaving the body still one short of thirty, the desirable round number. The matter of corresponding with neighboring Associations, having become a mere formality, it was voted, "That we dispense with the usual form of receiving messengers from, and sending them to corresponding bodies." Besides endorsing the American Baptist Publication Society, in common with various other denominational institutions, it was resolved, "That we request the Society to appoint a colporteur to labor in this Association for the coming year, and that we raise \$150, the amount of his annual salary." Measures were devised to secure the sum pledged, and it was added in another part of the minutes, that Mr. D. W. Halstead had already received an appointment from the Publication Society, to labor within the bounds of the Association, and had "commenced canvassing the field, in order to seek out and supply the destitute and others with religious books and tracts." The time of holding the annual meeting was changed by the concurrence of 21 churches of the 29, from the first to the fourth Wednesday of September.

The Fiftieth Anniversary was held at Damascus, September 24th and 25th, 1857. Introductory sermon by O. L. Hall; C. A. Fox moderator; J. N. Folwell and O. L. Hall clerks. Reported 65 baptisms and 1641 communicants.

This session was one of much interest but marked by few peculiarities. Some strange faces were present and many familiar ones, while some of the latter were absent, having been called to their rest and reward. Among these were Hon. Moses Thomas of Damascus,

Dea. L. L. Demming of Honesdale, and Rev. John Miller of Abington, one of the pioneer pastors of the Association. These were affectionately named in the letters from their respective churches. Rev. Henry Curtis, long among the most prominent and useful members of the body, was not present to occupy his usual place and exert his accustomed influence on the counsels of his brethren. The cause of his absence was alluded to in the letter from the Clinton Church. "Since our last anniversary," they say, "our highly esteemed pastor has been sadly and severely afflicted. He continued to preach for us until March last, when God in his mysterious providence, deprived us and the world of his labors at least for a season." E. L. Bailey was elected Corresponding Secretary in place of Mr. Curtis, and a Jubilee Meeting of the body, to celebrate its Semi-Centennial Anniversary, was appointed to be held at Abington, commencing on Saturday, December 26, 1857.

At the appointed place and time, a large number of ministers and members belonging to the various churches composing the Association, convened and organized by appointing Rev. C. A. Fox chairman, and Rev. J. N. Folwell scribe. The exercises were commenced at 10 o'clock, A. M. After singing by the choir and prayer by Rev. J. B. Kenyon, the opening sermon was preached by Rev. Wm. K. Mott of Hyde Park, from Isa. 56: 2. Theme—*The Increase and Stability of the Church*. The afternoon session was pleasantly and profitably occupied by prayer and conference, a large number of brethren and sisters taking part in the exercises. The occasion was one of deep interest and solemnity. At

the evening meeting a committee of three was appointed to secure the necessary funds for publishing the history of the Association, in course of preparation. The minutes of the organization of the Association on the 26th of December 1807, were read by E. L. Bailey, and also an Historical Discourse from 1 Sam. 7: 12, prepared by Rev. Zelotes Grenell of Port Jervis. This was followed by a season of conference, after which the meeting was closed with prayer and benediction by the chairman.

The services were resumed on the morning of the following day, it being Sabbath, at 10½ o'clock. The opening services were conducted by Rev. Charles Miller, followed by a sermon from Rev. T. J. Cole, on Isa. 61: 10. Theme—*The World's Jubilee*. After an intermission of fifteen minutes the services were resumed and the audience listened to a feeling and experimental sermon by Rev. Charles Miller; from 1 John 3: 1. This was followed by a deeply interesting season of confession and exhortation. In the evening E. L. Bailey preached from Heb. 2: 3, on *The Great Salvation*. The meeting closed with a solemn season of prayer and conference. The stifled utterance and falling tear evinced the interest and earnestness felt in the occasion and exercises. Thus closed the Semi-Centennial Celebration of the Abington Baptist Association. Five persons were present at this meeting, who had also been present at the organization of the Association fifty years before, viz., Dea. Jeffrey Dean and his wife Sybil, Jonathan Hall, Mrs. Sophia Clark and Mrs. Prudence Stone. Who of us will attend the Century Celebration in 1907? What hand will trace the Annals

of this Association during the coming half century?

The middle portion of this decade was marked by numerous additions to the churches by baptism, while its commencement and close were comparatively destitute of revival influences. There was, however, during this entire period, much earnest and enlightened effort on behalf of various missionary and other benevolent objects. The contributions of the churches to these objects, were generally more liberal and regular than they had been in former years. Among the objects patronized, the Bible cause seems to have elicited the greatest share of interest and received the most liberal support. On the 22d of December, 1843, "The Bible Society of North-Eastern Pennsylvania" had been formed, having for its "single object to aid in circulating the Scriptures in all lands." On the 3d of September, 1844, the constitution of this Society was simplified, and its name was changed to "The Lackawanna and Lackawaxen Bible Society," indicating the field of its operations along the Delaware and Susquehanna slopes of the Moosic Mountain. Its object was to "raise funds for supplying the destitute in our own neighborhood with the Word of God, and to aid the Parent Society in its efforts to circulate the Bible throughout the world." Any person could become an annual member by contributing fifty cents yearly, or a life member by the payment of ten dollars. Its officers consisted of a President, four Vice Presidents, a Secretary and Treasurer. Provision was also made for the appointment of a solicitor in each church of the Association, to collect funds, ascertain the amount of destitution in his own neighborhood, and report the

same to the Secretary of the Society. The annual meetings of the Society were to be held in connection with those of the Association, and also semi-annual meetings at such places as were most central and convenient. Bible Depositories were established at Carbon-dale and Honesdale.

At the opening of this decade, the machinery of the Society was in successful operation. The Treasurer reported at the annual meeting in 1848, some four hundred dollars raised during the current year for the objects of the Society, the most of which had been passed over to the Parent Society, divided about equally between donations and the purchase of Bibles and Testaments. During the first four years, the Society had distributed, by sale or grant, upwards of two thousand volumes. During the following year the Society raised nearly three hundred and fifty dollars by the sale of books and contributions from the churches, and distributed more than three hundred and fifty Bibles and Testaments. The receipts of 1850 fell somewhat below those of the previous year, while the books distributed were greatly in excess.

The Society continued its work of faith and labor of love through the remaining portion of this decade, raising funds, exploring the field, purchasing Bibles and Testaments, and distributing the same by sale or grant among the destitute and others, through its solicitors and colporteurs. By the latter, the most destitute portions of the field were thoroughly canvassed and abundantly supplied. In the Summer of 1852, a colporteur canvassed the Lackawanna Valley under the direction of this Society. He made the following re-

port which was published in the minutes of this year. "Most of my time, while in the employ of the Society, has been occupied in the distribution of Bibles and Testaments, either by sale or grant, among the inhabitants of the Lackawanna Valley. This valley takes its name and direction from the Lackawanna river. It extends from Carbondale City, south-west to Pittston, a distance of twenty-five miles. For some distance down the valley the mountains on either side close in their rocky fronts at intervals until they almost meet; but as you follow on down, they retire in gentle slopes and the valley spreads out into broad cultivated farms and beautiful waving woodlands. The valley also abounds in sources of mineral wealth. Its iron ore is said to be rich and abundant; its anthracite coal unsurpassed and inexhaustable. The farming and mining interests invite a heterogeneous, enterprising population; hence, the representatives of almost every land and language, creed and character, meet and mingle their discordant elements in this valley. The original settlers, chiefly from New England, were in some cases sceptical in their opinions. This feature adheres in some degree to their descendants, some of whom are avowed deists, others are careless sinners, while a few are devout Christians. Most of the American population are supplied with the Scriptures; but such as are not, accept a Bible thankfully and in many cases are able and willing to purchase one. The German population are quite numerous. They are in most cases either formal Protestants or liberal Catholics. The former are usually supplied with the Scriptures; the latter are to some extent, but if not, they are uniformly

willing to accept a Bible. The Welsh population are also numerous. They are uniformly Protestants and generally supplied with Bibles, both in Welsh and English. But if a family should chance to be destitute, they are anxious to be supplied. The Irish population are no less numerous than the Welsh and German. They are with few exceptions, rigid Catholics, strongly prejudiced and difficult of access. Most of them are destitute of the Scriptures. Some, however, are supplied with the Douay Bible; others are anxious to secure it. In a majority of cases they are unwilling to accept a 'Protestant Bible' as they are accustomed to call it; but many of them are willing, and some seem even anxious to receive and read the sacred Scriptures. About fifty families of this latter class have been gladly and gratuitously supplied. This is the valley in which your colporteur has lived, and these are the people among whom he has labored during the past three months. In that time about a thousand families have been visited; above five hundred Bibles and Testaments distributed, and nearly a hundred destitute families supplied."

In 1854 a colporteur was employed to explore another and less destitute portion of the field. In the Annual Report of the Society for this year, the following statements are made: "Our esteemed brother D. W. Halsted has been employed as our colporteur, for a few weeks during the past Winter, in the northern portion of Wayne County. In his report to the Board he gives the following interesting account of his labors: 'I found a few destitute of the Word of God, though not as many as had been represented. I traveled among

the Irish Catholics, but usually found them supplied with "Douay" or Protestant Bibles. I learned that two colporteurs had explored this section some three years since and one during the past year. As far as I went I supplied all who wished to be, with Bibles and Testaments either by sale or donation. I also distributed religious tracts and conversed with many on the interests of the soul. These labors have tended to interest me more and more in the Bible cause and in the salvation of sinners, and I hope that they may yet result in lasting good to others.' Brother Halsted was employed about three weeks; during that time he traveled some three hundred miles, visited about two hundred families and distributed near one hundred Bibles and Testaments."

It will be unnecessary to minutely trace the onward course of this Society during the three subsequent years of this decade. It, however, continued its benevolent work until the Autumn of 1858, when it was deliberately disbanded, there seeming to be no further necessity for a denominational society of this character. The field of its successful efforts, was now comparatively supplied and facilities for meeting any new or discovered want, were numerous and ample. As the last act of the Society before adjourning *sine die*, the following resolutions, after a free and full discussion, were adopted: "Resolved, that the Treasurer of this Society, be and is hereby authorized after cancelling all the debts of the Society, to pay the balance of the funds in his hands to the American and Foreign Bible Society; also that Rev. Charles Miller, a pioneer minister of the Association, be authorized to receive and distribute by

sale or gift, the balance of Bibles and Testaments now belonging to this Society." Thus commenced, continued and closed the Lackawanna and Lackawaxen Bible Society, one of the distinguishing features of the fifth decade of the Association.

HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF THE SEVERAL CHURCHES.

The thirty-five Churches that follow, have been sketched in the order of their recognition. The history of each has been traced from its origin until the Autumn of 1857, excepting in the case of three disbanded before, and three organized after that date. The Second Clifford Church became extinct in 1850; the Herrick, and Mt. Pleasant in 1851. The Falls Church lives in the Newton, and the Lebanon in its original designation. The history of the Preston Centre, Barryville and Shohola, and Scranton Churches, is commenced with their origin in 1858-9, and continued until the Fall of 1863. The Eaton, Welsh, Callicoon, and Jackson and Gibson Churches, once connected with this body, have been dismissed to unite with other Associations. Their history, therefore, has been omitted as not belonging to this Association.

PALMYRA CHURCH.

The "Lackawa Settlement,"—now Paupack—commenced in 1774, was among the earliest settlements made in north-eastern Pennsylvania. It was situated in Northampton—now Pike county—on the south-eastern side of the Wallenpaupack creek, some five miles above its confluence with the Lackawaxen. The

Indian path leading from "fair Wyoming on Susquehanna's side" to "Coshutunk"—now Cohecton—on the Delaware, passed through this ancient settlement. The pioneer population were chiefly from Connecticut, and took an active part in the unnatural war carried on between the "Yankees" and "Pennamites," as well as in the nobler struggle for national independence. Soon after the peace of the nation and neighborhood was secured, the tide of immigration, stayed for a time, again began to set in, and a number of families, some of whom were Baptists, settled in the place and immediate vicinity.

In 1788, Mr. Silas Purdy, who had been an officer in our revolutionary struggle, moved from Orange county, N. Y., and settled with his family in the wilderness some two miles nearly north of the "Lackawa Settlement," on the north-western bank of the Wallenpaupack. He entertained Baptist sentiments and a hope in Christ, but was not a communicant of any church. His wife was a regular member of the Baptist church in the place from which they had emigrated. In 1792, Mr. William Purdy settled with his family about two miles north of his brother Silas, on a large tract of wild land which he had previously purchased. He was a member and a licentiate of the Pleasant Valley Baptist Church, on the opposite side of the Hudson from his late home in Orange county, N. Y. His wife and one or two of his children were also members of the church. He at once commenced preaching in his immediate neighborhood, and soon extended his labors into adjacent settlements.

The Purdy Settlement situated in Palmyra, Wayne

county, was occasionally visited by various ministers of the Baptist denomination. In 1800, Rev. Lebbeus Lathrop of Orange county, N. Y., preached in the place and baptized Silas Purdy, Jr., Jacob Purdy, Miss Jane Purdy and the wife of Wm. Purdy, Jr., with one other. In the Spring of 1801, as is believed, Rev. Epaphras Thompson of Mt. Pleasant, also preached in the settlement and baptized Miss Phebe Purdy. In September of that year, the Palmyra Baptist Church was recognized with fifteen constituent members, by a council convened for that purpose. Mr. William Purdy was also ordained on the same day as pastor of this infant church, Revs. Epaphras Thompson, John Caton of Brookfield, N. Y., and William Bishop of the Lackawanna Valley, officiating on this interesting occasion. Mr. Purdy immediately baptized three of his own sons, namely, William, Ebenezer, and James.

Soon after its organization Messrs. Asa Cobb, Daniel Bowers and Asa Jones were appointed Deacons of this church. The subject of doctrine and discipline was next introduced. In 1802 the church resolved to hold communion at the Lord's table with none except baptized believers, and in the following year, that it is the duty of every male member who is head of a family, to maintain domestic worship, and that the female members ought to pray daily in secret. The church also voted that the moderator be instructed to make strict inquiry of all the members, once in three months, whether they have complied with the requirements of these resolutions. In addition the church appointed an annual meeting to be held on the last Thursday of October, at which all of the members were expected to be present if

possible, and participate personally in the exercises. In 1804, covenant meetings were appointed to be held on the last Saturday of each month, commencing at precisely 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

On the 26th of December, 1807, this church united with the Abington and Mt. Pleasant Churches, in forming the Abington Association. Rev. Wm. Purdy and Wm. Purdy, Jr., represented the church on that occasion.

In the Fall of 1810, the church reported to the Association 47 as their total membership, about 30 of whom had been added by baptism. In the following year the church again tightened the reins of discipline, when it was resolved that any member who is absent from covenant meeting, must render the reason for such absence at the ensuing monthly meeting. From this date until 1817, the church remained nearly stationary as to numbers and perhaps graces. Few changes occurred and little was accomplished. In 1818 it shared with most of the other churches composing the Association in a refreshing shower of reviving influences, greatly strengthening its graces and increasing its efficiency. They reported to the Association of this year eighteen received by baptism, and 64 as their total membership. This was, however, the culminating point in their numerical prosperity. In the following year they reported but two added by baptism and eleven dismissed by letter, reducing their number to 54. A calm more to be dreaded than a storm now followed. From this time until 1823 few changes occurred in the church of especial interest or importance. The year 1824 was marked by the death of Rev. Wm. Purdy,

the worthy pastor of the church from its organization, a period of nearly a quarter of a century. During that time he had faithfully preached the "glorious Gospel" and baptized some forty converts; sympathized with them in their joys and sorrows; married their children and buried their dead. They reported to the Association of that year, 48 as their total membership, and returned Mr. George Dobell as a licentiate and supply of the church.

Mr. Dobell continued to supply the church with general acceptance, occasionally aided and encouraged by the presence and preaching of neighboring pastors. In 1829 he was ordained as pastor of the church and he continued to sustain that relation until 1840, a period of some eleven years. During this time some of the churches belonging to the Association, were greatly agitated by the anti-mission leaven, creating unpleasant divisions and measurably retarding their spiritual prosperity. A party was formed and organized at Abington as an "Old School" Baptist Church. Mr. Wm. House also headed a party at Providence, in the Lackawanna Valley, and Mr. Dobell exerted his influence in the same direction at Palmyra, almost rending and nearly ruining the church. The occasional visits, however, of neighboring ministers was the means of saving it from utter extinction, and staying the blighting influence of "Old Schoolism." The following extract from the letter of the Palmyra Church to the Association in 1837 will perhaps furnish a fair specimen of the temper and tendency of this anti-mission movement. After confessing their "coldness, stupidity and barrenness," they say "we feel aggrieved by some of the proceedings of

this Association. Some of our brethren have seen fit to adopt a number of new modes or societies recommended and practiced by some of our sister churches. We cannot go into these new modes which the Association has adopted or recommended, since we can find neither example nor precept in the Word of God to justify them."

From 1840 to '52 the church was destitute of a settled pastor and stated preaching, but during that time it maintained a feeble existence and occasionally represented itself to the Association by letter and delegates. In the Summer and Autumn of the latter year Rev. L. L. Still preached for them frequently, and Rev. Henry Curtis also visited them occasionally. The faithful labors of these brethren were measurably blessed and the church was somewhat aroused and revived. They say in their letter to the Association of that year, "that the voice of the turtle is again heard in our land; seven converts have been planted in the likeness of the Saviour's death, and others seem inclined to follow in the same consecrated path." Rev. Sanford Leach supplied them a portion of the time in 1853, and extended his labors into the Spring of the following year. They reported to the Association in the former year 11 added by baptism and 42 as their total membership, and also said in their letter that they had heard the songs of the redeemed and again witnessed the prosperity of Zion. In the Spring of 1854, Rev. Newell Callender was engaged as a supply and soon after ordained as pastor of the church. His labors were greatly prospered. They reported to the Association in the Fall of that year 17 received by baptism

and 18 dismissed by letter to form a new church at "Jones' Settlement," some seven miles west, leaving 44 as their total membership. They also said in their letter that they had enjoyed two precious revivals during the past year. Again, in 1855 they say that the presence of the Lord seems to be still enjoyed. Their covenant and prayer meetings are well attended and are usually seasons of much interest. They have been deprived by sickness, of the labors of their pastor since the first of June, but they hope that he may soon be restored to his wonted health. Six beloved members have died, among whom were Reuben and Solomon Purdy, pillars in the church since its organization. Rev. O. L. Hall of Hollisterville, supplied them one-half of the time during the following Winter. They say in their letter to the Association in 1856, that they have enjoyed uninterrupted peace and harmony during the year and that they are supplied at present by Mr. J. M. Ball, whom they have licensed to preach the Gospel. Finally in 1857, they reported 36 as their total membership, and acknowledged their gratitude to God for the mercies of the past year; yet they regretted that Zion has slept and the prayer meeting has been neglected. Mr. J. M. Ball continues to preach for them once in two weeks with general acceptance.

FIRST ABINGTON CHURCH.

Most of the early settlers in Tunkhannock, now Abington, entertained Baptist sentiments. Mr. William Clark, his wife and son Jeremiah, who had settled in this wilderness in 1800, were esteemed members of the Baptist Church at Plainfield, Conn., whence they had emigrated. In the following year they were joined in the settlement by Mr. Jonathan Dean with his family, who was also a worthy member of the Baptist church at Exeter, Rhode Island. In February, 1802, Mr. John Miller with his family and a few other Baptist members also settled in Abington. Meetings for singing, prayer and exhortation were now established and sustained as a means of mutual comfort and encouragement. On the 22d of May following, Rev. Samuel Sturdevant visited the place and preached at the house of Mr. Clark, when the following brethren and sisters were organized as a church, viz., Jonathan Dean, Wm. Clark, John Miller, Geo. Gardener, Jeremiah Clark, Mary Clark, Polly Miller, Russel Hall and Alice Lewin. Polly Hall "covenanted to walk with them so far as light should appear," and Samuel and Mary Wall were "willing to travel with this people in the public worship of God." The following covenant was produced at this meeting and adopted as a bond of union and rule of conduct, viz., "We do voluntarily covenant with each other to maintain the cause and interest of our blessed Redeemer as we may be assisted by Divine grace, making the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament the rule of our faith and practice; to watch over each other for good, and to attend to all the laws and ordinances

of God's house, and also to keep up religious worship in our families by vocal prayer."

In June following, Mr. John Miller "began to improve his gift by way of preaching." Under his zealous labors "a reformation commenced," and during the Summer a number of the impenitent were hopefully converted. At a covenant meeting held on the 4th of September subsequent, Samuel Hall related his religious exercises and submitted himself to the watch-care of the church. Also, on the 3d of October following, after the members had "renewed covenant with a good degree of union and comfort, John Lewin, Stephen Parker, Henry Hall, John Clark and Jacob Ormsby told their experience and they were received with satisfaction." Again on the 6th of November following, James Dean and Sheldon Wall; and on the evening of the next day Phineas Reynolds, Freelove Reynolds, and Mercy Hall, related their exercises and "dedicated themselves to the Lord, to the satisfaction and fellowship of the brethren." None of these, however, were baptized as we can learn, there being no one in the place qualified to administer that ordinance.

It was now decided to call a council of recognition. Accordingly various brethren were invited from neighboring Baptist churches and convened, November 17th, 1802, at the house of Mr. Wm. Clark in Abington, Luzerne county, Penna., "to view their order" and give them fellowship as a Gospel church. The council was composed of brethren from churches as follows, viz., Rev. Samuel Sturdevant from Usher; Mr. Davis Dimock from Exeter; Rev. Wm. Bishop and Mr. Nathaniel Giddings from Pittston and Providence; Rev.

Wm. Purdy, Deas. Asa Cobb and Daniel Bowers from Palmyra; Messrs. Usher Moore, James Hulse and Sylvanus Southworth from Brookfield, N. Y., Rev. Wm. Purdy officiating as moderator and Mr. Nathaniel Giddings acting as clerk. Nine persons, five males and four females,—the same with substituting the name of Mary Parker for that of Russel Hall, who had previously organized as a church,—presented themselves with their letters of commendation and Articles of Faith for recognition. After private consultation the council, however, decided that the number of communicants were not sufficient to entitle them to recognition. It was then proposed to suitably increase the number by baptizing such of the converts “as might feel a freedom to go forward” in that ordinance. Accordingly six young men as follows, viz., John Lewin, James Dean, Jacob Ormsby, Henry Hall, John Clark and Phineas Reynolds, “voluntarily presented themselves and related their experience to general satisfaction.” These were baptized on the morning of the following day by Rev. Samuel Sturdevant and recognized with the “nine covenanted members,” by the council, as the Abington Baptist Church. “The church,” as the record runs, “then proceeded to call Mr. John Miller to the ministry of the Word and present him to the council, requesting his ordination to that office.” After the usual examination he was ordained according to request as follows, viz., Rev. Samuel Sturdevant offered the consecrating prayer; Rev. Wm. Bishop gave the charge, and Mr. Davis Dimock made the concluding prayer. Thus closed a season of peculiar interest and precious influence.

From this time until the formation of the Association, December 26th, 1807, the church moved forward in great harmony and happiness under the pastoral labors of Mr. Miller, lengthening its cords and strengthening its stakes. During that period upwards of forty were added to the church by letter, and about the same number by baptism, increasing its membership to more than one hundred. On the 4th of December, 1802, Mr. Jonathan Dean was appointed clerk of the church, and it was voted that the members bear the expenses of the church in proportion to their ability as determined by a committee chosen for that purpose. In this manner incidental expenses were provided for from time to time but the pastor continued to labor without a stated salary until the year 1806, when it was determined to "raise the sum of eighty dollars for the support of the Gospel." This amount was raised from year to year until 1810, when it was increased to one hundred dollars, half to be paid in money at the expiration of six months and the balance in produce at the close of the current year. Thus a partial support was provided for the pastor and occasionally enlarged or diminished in proportion to the means and liberality of the members.

During this period the church greatly enlarged its bounds. The labors of the pastor were not confined to his immediate neighborhood but were extended to adjacent settlements. The Baptist church at Pittston having become few in numbers, fourteen of the remaining members at their request, were received, May 17th, 1806, as a branch of this church, with the privilege of holding covenant meetings and enjoying occasional preaching. At a meeting for business, March 21st,

1807, the church appointed "meetings for public worship for the ensuing year as follows, viz., one half of the time at the Middle Settlement; one fourth at the West Settlement, and one fourth at the East Settlement and Elkwoods with supplies at Pittston, Thornbottom and mouth of Tunkhannock." This arrangement with slight modifications was continued until branches were formed, and churches were finally organized at all of these out-stations except Thornbottom—here the thorns choked the Word and it became unfruitful.

From the constitution of the Association to the Autumn of 1817, a period of ten years, the church continued to enjoy a measure of prosperity under the abundant labors of the pastor, receiving frequent additions by letter and baptism until it embraced upwards of 200 communicants. Unpleasant cases, however, of difficulty and discipline began to be occasionally introduced during this period, which still mar the records of the church and reputation of the dead. The pastor made an annual report of his various labors, at the April meeting of the church, when he was invited to continue the pastoral charge, and a committee was chosen to determine the amount of his salary, and make appointments at the different stations for the ensuing year. This became an established practice of the pastor and church. Other officers were also chosen as gifts were developed and necessity demanded. Messrs. Wm. Clark and James Hulse were appointed Deacons of the church, February 27th, 1808, and ordained to that office on the 3d of June following, Revs. Elijah Peck and Epaphras Thompson officiating on that occasion. On the 26th of November ensuing Mr. Jeffrey

Dean was chosen clerk of the church, in place of Jonathan Dean resigned, a position he occupied some twenty years. He was succeeded in 1828 by Mr. Ezra Wall, who yielded the office in 1832 to Mr. Wm. Dean, who served the church in this capacity during some twenty years. In 1852 Mr. Joseph B. Miller was chosen to that office, a position he still sustains. Assistant clerks were also appointed from time to time to keep a record of the business meetings at the various out-stations, and transmit the same to the principal clerk to be transferred to the church book. These assistant clerks usually officiated as Deacons in their respective neighborhoods. Mr. John Phillips was chosen one of the principal Deacons of the church, April 10th, 181 and ordained to that office at the session of the Association in the following Autumn.

In the year 1814 and '15 the church seems to have enjoyed a gentle and general revival, extending to different and distant settlements where numbers were baptized and added to the various branches of the parent stock. As this refreshing was preceded, so it was followed by frequent though not numerous accessions to the membership of the church.

During the next ten years, from 1817 to '27, some peculiar trials marked the course of the church and greatly marred its internal harmony. Comparatively large additions, however, were occasionally made, as well as numerous dismissions granted, thus rising and falling in its numerical prosperity. In the Autumn of 1818, the church reported 23 received by baptism and 74 dismissed by letter, chiefly to form new churches at Clifford and Greenfield. In the following year, 14 and in

1821, 43 were received by baptism, indicating revival seasons. On the 27th of April, 1822, Messrs. Jeremiah G. Northrop and Jeffrey Dean were chosen assistant Deacons; the former, after having purchased to himself "a good degree and great boldness in the faith," was gathered to his fathers; the latter still survives and is now the senior Deacon of the church, a man, naturally cautious and retiring, but graciously wise and reliable. Since his appointment to that office other faithful men have been associated with him in "serving tables." Mr. Isaac Tillinghast was Deacon of the church for a number of years, a man "universally esteemed." He was one of the constituent members of West Abington Church and died in 1852, loved and lamented. More recently Mr. Stephen Wright, and "Joseph and Benjamin," twin sons of the pastor, have also served the cause as faithful and efficient Deacons.

In 1824 some eighteen members were dismissed to unite with others in forming a new church at Eaton, opposite the mouth of the Tunkhannock. Early in 1825 a protracted difficulty between two private members foreshadowed still sorer trials, requiring the advice of a council which was convened in April of that year. In 1826 the peace of the church and popularity of the pastor, were greatly endangered by floating rumors of conduct as monstrous as immoral. After exhausting the prudence and patience of the members, a council of brethren from neighboring churches, was convened in August of that year, to investigate the reports and render advice. The reports were considered groundless by the council, and present danger seemed to be averted, but other difficulties and new disaffections

growing out of these and previous matters in dispute, another council was convened in April, 1827, but failing to harmonize contending parties, and effect an amicable settlement, the difficulty and disaffection continued and finally culminated in the exclusion of a large number of valuable members. It is a pleasant relief to return from these painful reminiscences to efforts and evidences of prosperity and progress. During this decade, perhaps in 1820 and '21, the church erected a plain but comfortable house of worship, situated about a half mile nearly south-east from the present meeting house, on a pleasant and picturesque elevation overlooking a wide range of field and forest, the first built by any church belonging to the Association. Previously to this, however, individual enterprise had erected a convenient house of worship on the eastern slope of the Moosic mountain near the banks of the Delaware, subsequently owned and occupied by the Damascus Church.

The church entered on the next ten years, from 1827 to '37, in the midst of a gracious and general revival—the seventh enjoyed since its organization. This work commenced early in the Winter of 1827 at the “Prickly Ash,” on the southern borders of Nicholson township, in a conference meeting, and continued to gradually spread until it reached the various portions of the church and aroused the whole community. In January, 1828, eleven persons met at the school house near the meeting house, and enjoyed a solemn season of prayer and confession. Other meetings were occasionally held at different places, the interest continuing to rise until the work moved forward with amazing power, reclaiming the wandering, and converting the impenitent.

Some 60 were baptized by the pastor in one month during the revival and received into the church. They reported to the Association in the Autumn of that year, 83 received by baptism, and 244 as their total membership. During a few subsequent years occasional additions were made by baptism, but no changes of especial interest marked the course of the church until 1832, when 36 members were dismissed to constitute the Nicholson Church, now Benton—reducing its membership to 159. This loss, however, was more than balanced by the accessions of the following year, when they reported 81 received by baptism and 284 as their total membership. They say in their letter to the Association in the following Autumn, that they “have shared during the past year in an extensive and gracious revival. Saints have been refreshed and sinners reclaimed. The cause of temperance has also made cheering progress, and a spirit of missionary enterprise has been manifested. Three Sabbath schools are sustained within the bounds of the church.” This refreshing, however, was followed by what the pastor quaintly calls the “anti-nomian bustle,” which considerably affected the general interests of the church, drying up and drawing off some 50 of the members, who were finally dropped in 1836, having previously erected their standard and unfurled their banner as an “Old School” Baptist church, still clinging to the name and claiming to be a continuation of the Abington Church. Some of these “signs of the times,” as they were appropriately termed, subsequently became dissatisfied with their new and negative position and returned from time to time to their old and active relations, but others still remained

away, maintaining a separate organization and concealing a dim light in an "empty pitcher." The Abington Church proper reported to the Association in the Autumn of 1837, 237 communicants, and said in their letter, that "a concert of prayer had been held in several portions of the church, and a spirit of Missions successfully cultivated. Small collections had been taken for the Burman Mission and some funds secured for the Bible Society. Sabbath congregations had been larger during the year than at any former period."

The first half of the next ten years, from 1837 to '47, was marked by frequent additions and uniform prosperity. The church reported to the Association in the Fall of 1838, eight returned from the "Signs," 45 received by baptism and 289 as their total membership. This revival commenced at the "Union School House," under the preaching of Rev. James Clark, and it seems to have extended under the labors of the pastor to other portions of the church. It continued, abating somewhat in 1841, until the Autumn of 1843, when the church embraced 324 communicants, the largest number reported at any period of its history. They say in their letter to the Association of that year, that "some of their members have been drawn away; others have died and a number are on beds of sickness, yet a kind Father has been pleased to grant the visits of his grace and accessions to our membership. Brotherly love continues and all seem to be 'endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' It is an occasion of gratitude that the life of our pastor is still spared and his labors are still enjoyed. Having culti-

vated this field upwards of forty years, it is surprising that such large congregations should continue to attend his stated appointments ; larger the present year if we are not mistaken than during any previous one." This, perhaps, was the culminating point in the popularity of the pastor as well as in the numerical prosperity of the church while under his protracted ministry. The following three years were remarkable chiefly for the entire absence of any additions by baptism, an isolated instance of so long duration. This decade, however, closed with an extensive revival. In the Autumn of 1847, the church reported to the Association, 51 baptisms and 271 communicants, being apparently reduced by revising the list of members and erasing a number of names from the church record.

The remaining ten years of the history of this church, from 1847 to '57, were distinguished by various changes—changes of pastor and policy in matters of minor importance. A new generation of men, in part, having arisen, modified measures were adopted, perhaps an improvement in many respects on the past, at least better adapted to the present tastes and wants of the church and community. But the same doctrines were preached and ordinances practiced. These are adapted to all times and places. In the Fall of 1848, the church reported 259 communicants but no baptisms, and only three the following year, indicating as is presumed, the period when the present commodious house of worship was built and dedicated. The material, and spiritual temple seldom rise side by side ; the one usually delays or damages the other ; the former if not built in "troubled times," frequently produces them. The pastor,

from his advanced age, being unable to meet the wants and wishes of the church and community, in the Spring of 1850, Rev. Andrew Hopper became associated with him, at his request, in the pastoral charge. Under their united, though not always harmonious labors, the cause was measurably prospered and some 30 persons were baptized into the fellowship of the church, increasing its membership to 307, as reported to the Association in the following Autumn. In December of that year, 55 members took letters of dismission to form the West Abington Church, and Mr. Hopper resigned his co-pastorate to take charge of the new church, leaving Mr. Miller sole pastor of the old church and reducing its membership by these and subsequent dismissions, to 231, as reported to the Association, in the Fall of 1851. In the Summer of 1852, a number of members living in the "Olmsted Settlement," were set off as a branch of this church; in the following Autumn a revival commenced at that place, under the labors of Messrs. Charles Parker and Benj. Miller, licentiates of the church, and continued until some 40 persons were baptized and added to the branch in that "settlement."

In the Spring of 1853, Mr. Miller resigned his charge of Abington Church, having been its esteemed pastor since its organization in 1802, a period of more than a half century. During that time the church had enjoyed some fourteen general revivals and received into its fellowship by baptism upwards of six hundred members. The church had also dismissed members to form six whole churches and parts of six others, and raised up and licensed some seven brethren to preach

the Gospel, most of whom were subsequently ordained and settled as pastors of Baptist churches. Indeed, few ministers have labored so long on the same field with an equal degree of efficiency and success.

Rev. Charles A. Fox became the second pastor of this church in the Spring of 1853, dividing his labors between this and the West Abington Church, a relation he still sustains with ample ability and general acceptance. In the Summer following his settlement, 50 members were dismissed to form the Mt. Bethel Church in the "Olmsted Settlement." The old church reported to the Association in the following Autumn, 24 baptisms and 172 communicants, and also said in their letter that "in the early part of the past Winter, our prayer meetings became more frequent and interesting. The Spirit of God came gently down upon the people, and some of our children and neighbors began to inquire the way to Zion, and a few souls have been made to rejoice in God as the rock of their salvation." During the following year a united effort was made to restore a healthy discipline and secure a living membership. In the latter part of Summer and earlier part of Autumn, earnestness in prayer, fervor in preaching, and attention in hearing, indicated an approaching revival. At times the cloud seemed ready to break and the shower to descend, yet the vision tarried and the blessing was withheld. At length in February, 1855, the gathering cloud of mercy broke and a refreshing shower descended on the thirsty soil, causing the seeds of truth to germinate and plants of grace to grow. Some thirty were hopefully converted, most of whom united with the church; a number of wanderers were reclaimed and

the brethren were greatly strengthened and encouraged. The church reported to the Association in the Fall of that year, 21 baptisms and 143 communicants, and said in their letter, that "no intoxicating drinks are sold in our village and very few profane the name of God, owing, we think, to the influence of truth, as professed and presented by the church, the only necessary organization for the regeneration of the world." The following extract from their letter to the Association will, perhaps, fairly close this extended sketch. They said in 1856, that they could not report that degree of consecration to God or enjoyment in his service that they would desire, yet they were united even in their coldness and were doing something for objects of Christian benevolence on a systematic plan. They deprecated the efforts making for the extension of slavery in our land and the kindred tendency of the rum power. Again, in 1857, they said that they were constrained to acknowledge the wonderful mercy of God toward them through all their ups and downs during the past half century. They met with the Association for the fiftieth time, never having failed since its organization. On the 26th of December of this year, a Jubilee Meeting was held with this church to celebrate the Semi-Centennial Anniversary of the Association, the pastor of the church presiding on that interesting occasion, one long to be remembered by those who were present, but repeated, perhaps, by none. This church is the prolific mother of churches, the Banyan tree of this fruitful region,

"Branching so broad along that in the ground
The bending twigs take root; and daughters grow
About the mother tree; a pillar'd shade,
High over-arch'd, with echoing walks between."

MOUNT PLEASANT CHURCH.

Many of the pioneers of Mt. Pleasant entertained Baptist sentiments. Mr. Samuel Stanton, the first settler in the place, came from Preston, Connecticut, and in the Spring of 1791, settled with his family in this wilderness. He and his wife were Free Communion Baptists. They were joined in the settlement from time to time by various persons of the same faith, chiefly from New England. "In the Spring of 1793, the public worship of God on the Sabbath was commenced in the settlement. Having no minister of the Gospel to preach for them, they read and listened to printed discourses." At the request of Mr. Stanton and others, *Rev. David

* Mr. David Jayne was born in Goshen, N. Y., in 1750. He commenced preaching at Wantage, N. J., in 1782, and was at this time, as the record runs, "very popular among one class of hearers, owing as is presumed to managements of voice, exercises of body and configurations of aspect, after the manner of the separatists." According to the same authority, he was ordained to the ministry in 1783 at Lower Smithfield, Northampton county, Pennsylvania. His name appears in the minutes of the Philadelphia Association, as pastor of the Baptist church in that place, from the time of its recognition in 1784 until 1799. He was subsequently settled at New Bedford—now Owego, N. Y., and reported in the minutes of the Chemung Association in 1806 and '7, as pastor of the infant church of that place; in 1809 the following warning was published in the minutes of that body:—"This Association warns all churches and the Baptists in general against David Jayne, formerly in connection with us but now expelled from the church at Owego, for holding and preaching that the wicked have no immortal part and will be annihilated at the day of judgment." In a journal kept by Rev. John Lawton, of a missionary tour made in the Summer of 1811, in south-western New York and north-eastern Pennsylvania, incidental allusion is made to the same name and perhaps person, in the following severe language:—"This church,"—Candor, N. Y.—"has passed through great trials and has excluded a number of its members on account of their adherence to David Jayne and his odious tenets." It is believed, however, that Mr. Jayne was subsequently reclaimed from his errors and restored to his ministry and membership. After living for many years in New York and Pennsylvania, he returned to New Jersey where he resumed his ministerial labors and finally died in the affection and confidence of his Christian brethren.

Jayne, a minister of the Baptist denomination, visited the place and preached to the people. It is believed that this was the first sermon ever preached in the settlement. On the 28th of June, 1796, the following persons organized as a "Free Communion Baptist Church" in Upper Smithfield, Northampton, now Mt. Pleasant, Wayne county, Pennsylvania, viz., Samuel Stanton, Joseph Tanner, Martha Stanton, Lydia Tanner, Margaret Dix and Rhoda Stearns.

In the Autumn of 1800, Rev. Epaphras Thompson, a regular Baptist minister from Bristol, Connecticut, came into the "Beech Woods" and commenced preaching at Mt. Pleasant. His sermons were highly prized, and it was proposed to secure his permanent services, but not agreeing with the leading members of this little band, in his views on the limitations of communion, the proposed settlement was indefinitely postponed. By request, however, he held "an argument" with Mr. Stanton on the communion question, "which ended in strife and confusion." They now agreed to separate, and Mr. Thompson preached his farewell sermon, intending to retire from the field, but finally a compromise was effected between the contending parties, and he consented to remain and resume his labors. Unbaptized persons were not to be admitted to communion in the church, but members were to be at liberty to commune with other denominations at their pleasure or convenience. With this understanding the church was re-organized and Mr. Thompson and others became members. It now embraced 14 communicants and was styled the "First Baptist Church of Wayne county."

Mr. Thompson having accepted the pastoral charge

of the church, settled with his family in the place and resumed his labors with renewed zeal and efficiency. His efforts were greatly blessed and an extensive revival immediately followed. The work of grace commenced in the settlement, continued to spread, and the church to expand until with its branches, it embraced upwards of 200 communicants, scattered over a wide range of this wild region. Besides sustaining regular appointments in the settlement, meetings were occasionally held on the Sabbath and during the week in private dwellings at various out-stations in order to accommodate the scattered membership and benefit remote as well as adjacent neighborhoods. To supply the increasing wants of this extensive field, a number of gifted persons residing at different points, were ordained as Evangelists and sent forth to preach the Gospel among the pioneer population scattered along the Delaware and Susquehanna slopes of the Moosic mountain. Messrs. Joseph Reader of Mt. Pleasant, and Gideon Lewis of "Elk-woods," were the first set apart to this office and appointed to this work. In June of 1806, Mr. Elijah Peck of Mt. Pleasant, and about the same time, Messrs. Enoch Owen of Cochection and Ebenezer Ingraham "recently from Nine Partners," were also ordained as Evangelists.

But in the midst of this ample provision and general prosperity, the communion controversy was again opened and agitated in the church. A majority being secured in favor of "free communion," it was now adopted as a "sentiment" by a vote of the members. In consequence of this retrograde movement, Messrs. Thompson and Peck with six others, obtained letters of dismissal and

organized on the 16th of September, 1807, as an independent body. On the 9th of October following, they were recognized as the "Strict Baptist Church of Mt. Pleasant," by a council of brethren convened for that purpose from Abington and Palmyra churches. The names of the constituent members were as follows, viz., Epaphras Thompson, Elijah Peck, Samuel Torrey, Benj. Newton, Rhoda Stearns, Elizabeth Torrey, Phebe Newton and Rhoda Kennedy. Revs. Wm. Purdy, John Miller and others, were present and participated in the services of recognition. The storm having passed and the waters subsided, the ark now rested on Mt. Pleasant, "wherein few, that is eight souls, were saved."

Thus originated the Mt. Pleasant Church proper; its progress and decline will be sketched in the following pages. The church immediately adopted such measures and employed such means as were designed to promote its interests at home and extend its influence abroad. On the 17th inst., it was "voted to continue covenant meetings on the Saturday before the third Sunday of each month and hold communion on the day following; a letter was also received from the brethren on the Delaware, requesting Mr. Peck to attend with them on Saturday next." In compliance with this request Messrs. Peck and Torrey attended meeting on the 24th inst., at the house of Mr. Amos Tyler on the Delaware, and "found the brethren halting between two opinions, or fearful to take a stand on Gospel ground." On the next day, however, they "had a refreshing season under the preaching of Mr. Peck, at the meeting house." On the 26th of December following, the church

was represented in a convention held at Abington for the purpose of forming an Association. Rev. Epaphras Thompson officiated as moderator of the meeting, and Rev. Elijah Peck preached the introductory sermon on that interesting occasion. The minutes of the convention are preserved in the records of Mt. Pleasant Church.

The course of the church during the next four years was marked by various changes and occasional accessions. At the beginning of this period the church was quite small and the members were somewhat scattered. Without a central or convenient place of worship, meetings were statedly held on the Sabbath and frequently during the week at log cabins or barns at different, and often distant settlements. The pastor did not devote his efforts exclusively to Mt. Pleasant or the immediate vicinity, but commenced preaching occasionally at Bethany, "Elkwoods," Cochection, "Nine Partners," and at various other points, as the wants of the field or wishes of the members might seem to indicate or require. Seasons of refreshing were enjoyed at most of these stations and materials gathered from which independent churches were subsequently formed.

In 1808, the church passed through some trials and at times complained of unusual coldness, but continued to enjoy a measure of peace and harmony. In March of this year, a letter of commendation was granted to Mr. Thompson, as he proposed to leave the place and labor in a branch of Abington Church, and the hand of fellowship was extended to Mr. Peck as pastor of Mt. Pleasant Church—a position he sustained most of the time until his decease. In April following, the wife of

the pastor united with the church, "to their great joy and satisfaction." On the second of February, 1809, Mr. Benjamin Newton was appointed clerk of the church in place of Mr. Samuel Torrey, who was about to remove from the place. One painful case of discipline is reluctantly recorded. Reports prejudicial to the moral character of Rev. Epaphras Thompson, having come to the knowledge of various members of Abington Church, in the bounds of which he was then living, that church communicated the same by letter in July of this year, to the Mt. Pleasant Church, of which he was still considered a member. The case being entertained and the facts investigated, Mr. Thompson was finally excluded from the church on a charge of dishonesty and drunkenness. On the 19th of November following, at the request of Mr. Elkanah Tingley, Mr. Peck visited the settlement at "Nine Partners," and baptized one person, and on the next Sabbath he preached at Bethany in the house of Mr. Ephraim Torrey, baptized four converts and administered the Lord's Supper to these, and three others previously baptized. On the 13th of December following, he baptized five persons in the vicinity; on the 25th inst., one, and on the 19th of May, 1810, three more also went forward in that ordinance. The church reported to the Association in the Fall of this year, 12 and in that of the following, 28 communicants. On the 23d of May, 1812, Mr. Peck "visited the Elkwoods settlement and found it to be a religious time," baptizing one person and admitting four others as members of the church. While the cause was thus prospering abroad, the claims of the field at home were not for-

gotten or neglected. Frequent additions by letter and baptism of persons residing at Mt. Pleasant, were gratefully recorded. The church reported to the Association in the Autumn of this year, five baptisms and 33 communicants.

During the next ten years, little of especial interest transpired within the bounds of the church. The pastor continued his usual labors and the church received occasional accessions. Among these were some persons of superior ability, who exerted a moulding influence on the subsequent character of the church. Thus far, for want of suitable gifts or recognition of them, the pastor was left to "serve tables" without the assistance of regular Deacons. These, however, were furnished from abroad. On the 16th of July, 1814, Dea. Peter Spencer, and on the 20th of May, 1815, Dea. Rufus Grennell united with the church, both from Connecticut, the one recommended by the church of Guilford, and the other by that at Winchester. On the 17th of September following, Mr. Sheldon Norton, also recommended by the church at the latter place, was received as a member of the church. In the Summer of 1817, a number of valuable members were dismissed to form a church at Bethany.

It is, however, unnecessary to dwell on this part of its history; a brighter portion invites our attention. In the Summer of 1822, the members of the church were measurably revived and a number of the impenitent hopefully converted. The church reported to the Association in the Autumn of this year, 12 baptisms and 52 communicants. This, however, was but the shadow of good things to come. In the following

Summer a refreshing shower descended on the thirsty soil, causing the seeds of truth to germinate and plants of grace to grow. The gracious work having commenced in the church, continued to spread until it pervaded the entire community. At a covenant meeting, held June 7th, 1823, an unusual interest was manifested by the members present. About the middle of the month, "the Lord was pleased," as the record runs, "to visit his people with his presence and sinners with his grace." On the 29th of the same month, Rev. John Smitzer, of Bethany, came to the aid of the pastor and preached with marked effect. He baptized 10 persons on the same day, five of whom belonged to the family of Mr. Peck and two were children of Dea. Rufus Grennell. The meetings continued peculiarly interesting and converts were graciously multiplied during the Summer and following Autumn. At a special meeting for business, August 22d of this year, Mr. Rufus Grennell was recognized as Deacon of this church, and Mr. David Horton was also appointed to that office. The church reported to the Association in the following Autumn, 27 baptisms and 81 communicants. On the 20th of November, 1824, Rev. Enoch Owen became a member of this church, recommended by the Damascus Church—a relation he sustained some nine years. The church reported to the Association in the Fall of 1825, seven baptisms and 98 communicants.

During a few subsequent years, the church declined in numbers and became distracted in its counsels. Two parties were formed and the relations of the pastor suspended. The church or the Canaan branch was supplied with preaching a portion of the time in 1827

and '28, by Rev. Horace Jones; in 1829 and '30, by Rev. Charles H. Hubbard; in 1831, by Rev. Alex. Smith, and in 1832 the relations and labors of Mr. Peck were resumed. In the year 1830, an extensive revival was enjoyed within the bounds of the church, under the labors of Mr. Hubbard. The church reported to the Association in the Autumn of that year, 31 baptisms and 101 communicants. This was the meridian of its numerical strength. From this time the church commenced and continued to gradually decline until it ultimately disbanded.

During the next ten years, few changes occurred in the downward course of the church, worthy of a permanent record. Some interesting seasons were enjoyed and a few additions by baptism, were reported. Cases of discipline and exclusion were frequent, and often painful. On the 31st of December, 1831, Mr. John Tiffany was appointed Deacon of the church. During most of 1834, the church was destitute of stated preaching on account of the impaired health of the pastor. Mr. Peck died March 16th, 1835, lamented by a large circle of relatives and friends. In the Summer of 1837, Dea. David Horton died, and in the following Autumn, Mrs. Rhoda Stearns also deceased while residing at Harford. She was one of the constituent members of the church and had been a professor of religion upwards of a half century. In July, 1839, Rev. Joseph Curren, pastor of the Clinton Church, was engaged to supply this church one-fourth of the time for four months. The church reported to the Association in the following Autumn, one baptism and 32 communicants.

The course of the church during the concluding ten years of its history was equally barren of general interest. The church was destitute of stated preaching from 1840 to '45, but covenant meetings were occasionally held and were sometimes seasons of peculiar interest. On the 6th of September, 1845, Rev. John Baldwin met with the church and a general settlement was made of existing difficulties. The members present agreed, as they frequently had before, to live in peace and labor in harmony, and Mr. Baldwin accepted an invitation to become their pastor. On the 4th of October following, Revs. Henry Curtis and John T. Mitchell met in council with the church and advised the brethren to change the name of the church to Mt. Pleasant and Lebanon; each branch to appoint a Deacon, celebrate the Lord's Supper and hold monthly covenant meetings. This advice was complied with and a portion of the Lebanon Church united with the Mt. Pleasant Church. Mr. John Tiffany was continued as Deacon of the branch at Mt. Pleasant, and on the 1st of November of this year, Mr. Gaylon Wilmarth was appointed Deacon of that at Lebanon. The record of this double church is a blank with one exception, until January 9th, 1851, when a meeting was held at the house of Mr. Lewis Peck and the church disbanded. Thus these two branches peacefully expired in each others embrace.

The following were among the principal causes of the gradual decline and ultimate dissolution of the Mt. Pleasant Church.

The dismissal of members contributed to this sad result. Valuable members were frequently dismissed for the purpose of forming new churches at various

points in the surrounding region. Independent churches were organized in the vicinity of Mt. Pleasant, at different times and places, as follows, viz., a church was recognized at Bethany in 1817; at Damascus in 1821; at Scott in 1823; at Gibson and Jackson in 1825; at Deposit, Lebanon and Canaan—now Clinton—in 1831, and at Herrick in 1834. Some of the constituent members of most, if not all, of these churches, were dismissed from the Mt. Pleasant Church. The new interest at Canaan absorbed a number of valuable members and at first assumed the venerable name of the parent church. Thus for a time it proved a formidable rival, but finally became a friendly ally of the church at Mt. Pleasant.

Again, the peace and prosperity of this church, were sadly marred by internal discord and dissensions. Some of the members seem to have been exceedingly contracted in their views and tenacious of their opinions; easily offended and difficult to become reconciled. By such persons, matters of comparatively small importance were made the occasion of protracted disputes and painful alienations. Personal difficulties were often brought before the church or its committee, for settlement without having previously taken the prescribed steps of Gospel labor. Charges of trespass, slander and breach of promise, were among the more important preferred and persisted in; some of which were amicably settled but others were prolonged and resulted in unpleasant discipline and ultimate exclusion. Thus the church was wasted and weakened by internal discord and dissensions. But in the midst of this fraternal strife and general confusion there were some bright ex-

amples of devoted piety and consistent character. The cause was not entirely left to the sport of faction or the rule of weak and wicked men, but some born in the storm and rocked in the tempest, have since endured the calm and rejoiced in the sunshine, and are now esteemed members of other churches, and distinguished ornaments to the Christian cause. Here we conclude this extended notice of the origin and growth, the decay and dissolution of the Mt. Pleasant Church and erect it as a beacon light on the rugged rocks of discord and dissension, as a timely warning to benighted mariners who may perchance hereafter be drawn into these dark waters or driven into these dangerous seas.

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BETHANY CHURCH.

The present site of Bethany having been selected and surveyed for a county-town, a settlement was commenced upon it in 1801, which soon became a pleasant and prosperous village. The place was visited occasionally at an early period by various Baptist ministers mostly located in the surrounding region. In the Fall of 1807, Rev. Epaphras Thompson, of Mt. Pleasant, preached at Bethany and continued for a time, as is presumed, to frequently visit the place and vicinity. In the Summer and Autumn of 1809, an interesting revival was enjoyed in Bethany and adjacent neighborhoods. Congregations were comparatively large and remarkably attentive; a general seriousness seemed to pervade the minds of the entire community and "a number of persons were made the hopeful subjects of converting grace." In the Summer of that year, Rev. Elijah Peck, pastor of Mt. Pleasant Church, baptized three persons at Bethany, and in the following Autumn he also baptized four more and administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. "It was a glorious day indeed," as the record runs, "to many precious souls." On the 12th of December following, a meeting was held at the house of Mr. David Bunnell, at which five persons were received as candidates for baptism. On the next day Mr. Peck preached at the house of Mr. Coleman, and baptized the above candidates. "It was a day of much love and true humiliation before God." On the following Sabbath, Rev. *"Jesse Hart-

* Rev. Jesse Hartwell was born in Rowe, Franklin County, Massachusetts, Feb. 24th, 1771; he died November 21st, 1860, in Perry, Lake County, Ohio.

well, of Massachusetts, attended meeting at Bethany, and preached twice to great satisfaction, and on the following day baptized Mr. Ephraim Torrey." The ordinance was administered in the Lackawaxen creek, a few rods below the present residence of Rev. Henry Curtis.

In the Spring of 1810, Mr. Peck again visited the place and baptized three converts. "It was a time," according to the record, "of rejoicing in the Lord." In the Summer of 1811, Rev. John Lawton, of New York, while on a missionary tour under the patronage of the "Hamilton Missionary Society," came to Bethany and "preached twice in the court house." Rev. Wm. Purdy, of Palmyra, was also accustomed to preach at Bethany and adjacent settlements.

These persons, baptized at various times near Bethany, united with the Mt. Pleasant Church and acted as a branch of that body until a few members of Palmyra Church and "elsewhere," having settled in the immediate vicinity, it was deemed advisable to organize as an independent church. Accordingly a meeting was held in the house of Mr. Isaac Dimmick, December 28th, 1816, "for the purpose of taking into consideration so important and desirable an object," and a committee of three was appointed to draft a Covenant, Articles of Faith and Practice and report the same at a subsequent meeting for inspection and approval. The above committee reported progress at a meeting held in the house of Mr. Wm. Purdy, Jr., January 4th, 1817; at a meeting held on the 8th inst., at the house of Mr. Benj. Raymond, the committee made a final report as contemplated, and Articles of Faith and Covenant were

adopted. Meetings for worship and business were held by the brethren and sisters from time to time until June 7th, 1817, when a council, composed of delegates from Palmyra, Abington and Mt. Pleasant churches, was convened at the court house in Bethany, Wayne County, Pa., for the purpose of recognizing them as an independent church, Rev. John Miller officiating as moderator, and Dea. Roger Orvis acting as clerk of the council. Revs. Wm. Purdy, Elijah Peck and others were present as delegates and participated in the deliberations of the meeting. After a preparatory sermon by the moderator, from 1 Cor. 6: 20, eighteen persons, eight males and ten females, presented themselves with their letters of commendation, covenant, Articles of Faith and Practice and received fellowship as the Regular Baptist Church of Bethany.

A meeting of the church was held on the 11th of July following, for the purpose of making such regulations as were necessary to promote the peace of the church and prosperity of the cause. Mr. Wm. Purdy, Jr., was appointed standing moderator, and Mr. Ephraim Torrey clerk of the church. It was also decided to hold covenant meetings on the first Saturday of each month and celebrate the Lord's Supper on the Sabbath following—subsequently changed to once in two months. The church united with the Association in the following Autumn—the first admitted into that body.

The church moved forward harmoniously, enjoying occasional preaching by Mr. Peck, and others from abroad, but was anxiously seeking to secure the services of a settled pastor. On the 28th of January, 1819, Mr. Wm. Purdy, Jr., was chosen Deacon of the church

and requested "to exercise his gifts by way of public improvement." On the 10th of September, 1820, Mr. John Smitzer visited the place and preached for the church. Six persons were baptized on the same day by Rev. Elijah Peck. On the 8th of October following, Rev. Nathaniel Otis, missionary of the "New York Missionary Society," preached in the place, baptized four persons and administered the Lord's Supper to the church. On the 17th of November of that year, letters of dismission were granted to Mr. Wm. Purdy, Jr., and other members of his family, about to emigrate to the West, and a call was given to Rev. John Smitzer to take the pastoral charge of the church. On the 8th of December following, Mr. Ephraim Torrey was chosen Deacon and Dea. Osborn Olmsted, formerly a Deacon of the Bethel Baptist Church of New York, was requested to officiate in that capacity in this church. In the Autumn of 1821, Mr. Smitzer responded to the call of the church and assumed the pastoral charge, dividing his labors during the first year between this church, that at Damascus, and the Canaan branch of Mt. Pleasant Church; subsequently the Bethany and Damascus churches shared his entire labors. He continued to serve the cause in this manner until the Spring of 1826, when he resigned his charge and retired from the field, highly respected by the church and community. Under his labors the church at Bethany was measurably prospered and gradually enlarged, more than doubling its membership and greatly increasing its efficiency. It however, passed through some trials during that period, cases occurring of protracted difficulty and painful discipline, some resulting in exclu-

sion, others in reconciliation. It was a season of both planting and pruning. The church reported to the Association in the Autumn of 1826, 45 communicants.

During the next three years the church was destitute of a settled minister but continued to sustain stated meetings and a salutary discipline. In the Fall of 1829, Rev. Charles H. Hubbard accepted the pastoral charge of the church, supplying the Mt. Pleasant Church a portion of the time for about two years; subsequently his labors were divided between the Bethany and Damascus churches, thus continuing to serve the cause until the Spring of 1832, when he resigned his charge of the former church. He was a man of rare talents, respectable attainments and agreeable address. His discourses were well digested and arranged, abounding in brilliant thoughts and forcible illustrations. Under his labors the church was greatly prospered and enlarged. A precious revival was enjoyed in 1831, continuing through most of the year. Backsliders were reclaimed, excluded members restored and repenting sinners hopefully converted. The church reported to the Association in the Autumn of that year, 45 baptisms and 98 communicants. During this revival valuable gifts were developed and encouraged. On the 28th of May, of that year, Mr. Lucian Hayden, a young man of respectable promise, was licensed to preach the Gospel, and on the 11th of June following, Mr. Charles A. Fox, recently from Masonville, N. Y., was also "regularly licensed as a preacher of the Gospel." After various and valuable labors in different and distant places, he has returned to the Association and is now the esteemed pastor of Abington Church. On the 1st of October

following, Mr. Joseph A. Hubbard was chosen Deacon of the church.

In the Fall of 1832, Rev. Henry Curtis accepted the pastoral charge of the church and continued to sustain that relation until the Autumn of 1845, a period of thirteen years. The field was ample and his labors were abundant. Besides his regular appointments at Bethany village, he was accustomed to preach statedly at Honesdale, Smith Hill and Paupack Eddy. He also supplied the church at Canaan in 1834; that at Paupack Eddy in 1838; that at Damascus in 1839, and for some years subsequent. Under his efficient labors the church at Bethany was greatly prospered and gradually enlarged. During the time nearly 150 persons were received by baptism, and in 1843, the church embraced 210 communicants. This was the culminating point in its numerical prosperity. From this time its membership began to gradually diminish, chiefly on account of the dismissal of members to form independent churches at various points in the surrounding region, and also the floating character of the population occasioned by the removal of the county courts in 1842, from Bethany to Honesdale. When Mr. Curtis retired from the field in 1845, the church embraced 133 communicants.

It remains merely to notice some incidents of general interest, that occurred from time to time under his pastoral charge. On the 27th of April, 1833, Mr. Eliphalet Wood was chosen Deacon of the church. Having faithfully served the cause in that relation, he died May 10th, 1842, on the day Honesdale Church was recognized. On the 5th of October, 1834, Mr. Isaac Brown was also chosen Deacon, and on the 27th of No-

vember, 1841, Mr. L. L. Demming was elected to that office. He subsequently transferred his membership to Honesdale Church, of which he was an esteemed Deacon until his decease. On the 11th of June, 1842, Messrs. E. L. Reed and C. M. Hayden were also appointed Deacons of the church. At a still later period Mr. Homer Brooks was elected to that responsible office. Many of these, after having "purchased to themselves a good degree," have been called to their gracious reward; others still survive to serve the cause and watch over the interests of the church. On the 3d of March, 1834, Rev. Charles H. Hubbard was excluded from the church; two years subsequent he was restored to membership, but not to the ministry.

In 1841, the church built a meeting house at a cost of \$1700, and occupied it for the first time, January 9th, 1842; it was dedicated to the worship of God, on the 18th of February following, by appropriate religious services. Until this time the various meetings of the church had been held in the court house, fire-proof, Academy building and private dwellings, as were most convenient. A series of meetings was immediately commenced in the new meeting house and continued from day to day during some weeks. The pastor was aided by Rev. Lewis Raymond from Cooperstown, N. Y. During this meeting the members of the church were greatly revived and a large number of the impenitent were hopefully converted. The gracious work extended to the village of Honesdale and resulted in the formation of an independent church at that place. The Bethany Church reported to the Association in the following Autumn, 47 received by baptism. During

the protracted pastorate of Mr. Curtis, cases of discipline were numerous in the church and frequently unpleasant. It was a season of both watering and weeding.

The pastors subsequently settled with this church remained but a brief period. On the first Sabbath of October, 1845, Rev. M. M. Everets commenced his labors as pastor of the church and continued to sustain that relation during two years. His efforts were zealous and faithful. Difficulties, however, between a former pastor and some influential members greatly marred the peace and prosperity of the church. They reported to the Association in the Fall of 1846, three received by baptism and 133 as their total membership, and also said in their letter that their present state was lamentable. Rev. Andrew Hopper was the next pastor of the church. His labors commenced in November 1847, and closed in the Spring of 1850. During that period a number of members were dismissed to form the Lebanon and Berlin churches. The church reported to the Association in the Autumn of 1850, 67 communicants. In December of that year, Rev. L. L. Still accepted the pastoral charge of the church and continued to serve the cause in that relation upwards of a year. His labors closed in the Spring of 1852, when the church reported 54 communicants.

In February, 1853, Rev. Henry Curtis again became pastor of the church and sustained that relation during some three years. Under his labors a few additions were received. The church report to the Association in the Autumn of 1854, seven baptisms and 54 communicants, and also say in their letter that they are few

and feeble compared with what they once were, many having died, others backslidden or totally apostatized, and at least seven churches having been formed of members chiefly from this church. Some mercy drops, however, have fallen in their midst and a few souls have been hopefully converted. Again, they say in their letter to the Association in the Fall of 1855, that they are "faint yet pursuing." The Gospel is faithfully preached to them by their pastor, yet without any marked or immediate results. Harmony prevails in a good degree and a hope is entertained of better days. In the Spring of 1856, Rev. Newell Callender became pastor of the church and continued to preach for them one-fourth of the time during the year. Rev. D. W. Halsted was the next pastor of the church and still occupies that position. They report to the Association in the Autumn of 1857, 36 communicants, and say in their letter that they are still in a very feeble state and in danger of losing their house of worship on account of a debt that has been suffered to remain upon it. This debt has since been cancelled through the efforts of the present pastor, and liberality of some of the members, and other generous friends.

SCOTT VALLEY CHURCH.

The "East Settlement" was early occupied by Rev. John Miller as an out-station, and it is frequently named in the ancient records of Abington Church. Messrs. Roger Orvis, and Zerah Scott were among the pioneers of that settlement, and were also among the first accessions to this venerable church. Having emigrated from Cornwall, Addison county, Vermont, they settled with their families in 1800, in what is now Scott, Luzerne county, Penna., and immediately commenced covenant meetings—the first meetings of the kind, as is believed, established by regular Baptists within the present bounds of the Association. The first of these meetings, was held at the log-cabin of Mr. Orvis, and was attended by three brethren with their wives, viz., Roger and Mariamni Roxana Orvis, Zerah and Sybil Scott, Isaac and Eleanor Tripp. The first four were regular Baptists and bore letters of commendation from the Cornwall Church. * Mr. Tripp at this time belonged to

* This Isaac Tripp was in early life a resident at "Capouse Meadows" in the Lackawanna valley. In the eighteenth year of his age, and soon after the Wyoming massacre, he was taken captive by the Indians and with others marched to Canada. On the way he experienced the most excruciating sufferings from the gnawings of hunger and cruel treatment of the savages who bound his hands behind him and compelled him to run the gauntlet. At Niagara he met his cousin, Miss Frances Slocum, who was also a captive from the Wyoming valley. They planned their escape but their intentions being discovered by their captors, they were separated never more to meet on earth, and young Tripp was sold to the English and compelled to enter their service, in which he reluctantly continued until the close of the revolutionary war. He now returned to his early home and resumed the peaceful pursuits of the farm. He moved to Scott, Luzerne county, and finally settled in the Elkwoods in Susquehanna county. His wife died in Clifford, May 10th, 1816, aged 67 years. He followed her to the grave April 15th, 1820, aged 60 years. The remains of both now repose in the burying ground near Clifford corners.

the Free Communion Baptist church of Mt. Pleasant, but subsequently he and his wife, formerly a member at Pittston, united by letter with the regular Baptist church of Abington. At a meeting for public worship held at the house of Mr. Orvis on the fifth Sabbath of July, 1803, "Roger Orvis, Zerah Scott, Benj. Potts, Hosea Phillips, Mariamni Roxana Orvis, Sybil Scott, Mary Potts, Polly Hobbs and Priscilla Sacket tendered covenant and united with the Abington Church."

These covenant and preaching meetings thus commenced, were held from time to time at such private dwellings as were most central and convenient, usually pausing in their annual circuit at the log cabins of Messrs. Roger Orvis, Micah Vail and Samuel Callender. At a later period, these meetings were occasionally held at the houses of Messrs. Abraham Whetherby, Wilmot Vail and various other brethren, where they would be cordially received and could be conveniently entertained. These were precious seasons to the pioneer settlers of this comparative wilderness; reviving former scenes and recalling favorite associations. Besides these usual means, other instrumentalities were employed to sustain the infant cause and secure a thriving interest in this growing settlement. On the 21st of February, 1807, the church appointed Messrs. Roger Orvis, Zerah Scott, and Benj. Potts "to keep up meetings in the 'East Settlement.'" Also, August 22d of that year, Mr. Orvis was chosen Deacon, and on the 31st of December following, Mr. Micah Vail was appointed treasurer for this settlement. Thus from time to time different persons were enlisted, and various gifts employed to develop the pecuniary resources and cultivate

the spiritual graces of the members composing this branch of the old church. The pastor continued to preach in the settlement on some four Sabbaths in each year, and to baptize occasional converts into the fellowship of this branch. He was also accustomed to attend covenant meetings and communion seasons as well as funeral and other occasions. Under his persevering labors a sufficient number of members were finally gathered to constitute an independent church. He was present on the 18th of September, 1817, when they organized as such and adopted Articles of Faith, rendering advice and giving his approval.

A council of recognition was convened on Saturday, the 18th of October following, at the house of Mr. Micah Vail, composed of brethren from Abington, Palmyra, Mt. Pleasant and Bethany churches, Rev. Elijah Peck officiating as moderator and Mr. Nathaniel Giddings acting as clerk. Thirty-two persons, 14 males and 18 females, presented themselves to the council, with letters of dismissal from Abington Church, and their Articles of Faith and church covenant, and received fellowship as the Greenfield Baptist Church by appropriate and impressive services. The council then adjourned to Clifford, for the purpose of recognizing a church in that place on the following Monday.

It will be necessary to notice little more than a few incidents in the history of the first ten years of this church. During this period Rev. John Miller continued to supply the church occasionally, and administer the ordinances. Their covenant meetings were held on Saturday before the second Sunday of each month, and church meetings as occasion required for the discipline

of unfaithful members and transaction of other necessary business. Both public and private meetings were held at the dwellings of various brethren, as were most convenient, alternating during the latter portion of this decade, between Greenfield and Blakely, with occasional variations "over the mountain."

On the 21st of February, 1818, Mr. Elisha Smith was elected clerk of the church. In May following, it was "voted to raise twenty-five dollars by equality for the support of the Gospel" and a committee of two was appointed "to visit the brethren at Clifford and request that Messrs. Ira Justin and John Finn may preach among us a certain portion of the time." These two brethren were constituent members and licentiates of that church. They commenced their public career side by side, but their course soon began to diverge and finally became widely separated. In July following, the above committee reported that the Clifford Church had granted the request. Accordingly Messrs. Justin and Finn were engaged to supply the church once in four weeks for six months, alternating their labors with each other and with those of Rev. John Miller. Mr. Finn finally united with the church, April 8th, 1820, and continued to labor as a supply during some seven years. On the 1st of January, 1822, a council was convened for his ordination, but declined the service. On the 27th of October, 1827, he was excluded from the church for immoral conduct. His subsequent career fully justified the decision of the council and action of the church in his exclusion; "waxing worse and worse," he has passed through the various stages of Mormonism, Universalism and Spiritualism. It is, however, a relief

to learn that many of his relatives and descendants have avoided the evil of his ways and become esteemed members of Baptist churches.

When this church united with the Association in the Autumn of 1818, it embraced 39 communicants. On the 24th of October following, Mr. Roger Orvis was chosen Deacon of the church, a position he sustained with eminent ability and faithfulness until the Spring of 1839, when he moved with his companion to Clifford, where they have since deceased. On the 23d of June, 1821, Mr. Samuel Vail was appointed clerk of the church, Mr. Smith having resigned the place on account of his advanced age and growing infirmities. On the 25th of September, 1824, Messrs. Wilmot Vail and Samuel Callender, Jr., were chosen Deacons of the church, and on the 5th of May, 1827, Mr. Harvey Vail was appointed clerk, in place of Mr. Samuel Vail resigned. Such were some of the changes that marked or marred the first decade of this church. During that time 26 persons were received into its fellowship by baptism, increasing its membership to 56 in 1824, and 51 in 1827.

The church experienced various changes during the next ten years. It entered upon this period without a settled pastor, but continued to enjoy stated supplies. Rev. John Miller still preached for the church occasionally. In 1828 Rev. Charles Miller frequently visited the place and preached for the people. During the Summer and Autumn of 1829, Rev. James Clark, under appointment of the "Baptist Missionary Convention of the State of New York," supplied the church and baptized numerous converts within its

bounds. In December of this year, Rev. Wm. House, from New Jersey, united with the church and accepted the pastoral charge. For a time the cause was greatly prospered under his efficient labors. The church reported to the Association in the Fall of 1830, 31 baptisms and 101 communicants. It had already sent out a number of vigorous branches and spread over a field of great extent and promise, embracing at this time within its bounds, Greenfield, Blakely, Providence, and Covington. In the Summer of this year a few Baptists from Wales settled in Carbondale and in the following Autumn united with this church. Others followed in their wake from time to time during 1831, '32 and '33, amounting in all to some thirty members. Among these were Dea. John Bowen, James Bowen, Rev. Wm. Richmond and Wm. Thomas. Mr. James Bowen was licensed to preach the Gospel, August 19th, 1831, but died February 2d, 1832. On the 22d of February, 1833, Mr. Wm. Thomas was also licensed to preach the Gospel. In March following these Welsh members, 29 in all, took letters of dismission and organized as the First Baptist Church of Carbondale, thus timely, though not timidly, leaving the rocking vessel and escaping the gathering storm. The church was now slowly nearing the whirlpool of Anti-nomianism. The pastor and some 45 of the members having imbibed anti-mission principles, separated from the church in the Spring of 1834, and formed an "Old School" Baptist church at Providence, in the Lackawanna valley.

The church was now left destitute of a pastor and distracted by previous disputes and disaffections. The usual meetings, however, were resumed in the Summer

of that year, and Dea. Roger Orvis was appointed clerk of the church, the previous one having gone off with the "Signs of the Times." In the following Autumn Rev. Levi Baldwin united with the church and accepted the pastoral charge. He sustained this relation until the Spring of 1837, a period of nearly three years. During that time the church experienced a calm and remained nearly stationary as to numbers, reporting some 58 communicants to the Association in the Autumn of each year. During this decade the various meetings of the church were held at school houses in place of private dwellings as formerly, and some 66 persons were baptized on a profession of faith and received into its fellowship.

The course of the church during the next ten years was relieved by a protracted season of revival and also chastened by unpleasant cases of discipline. At the beginning of this period the church was enjoying peace and an occasional sermon from Revs. Charles and John Miller. Their visits were timely and valuable. About this time Mr. John G. Wetherby was appointed clerk of the church. In February, 1839, Rev. James Clark visited the place and preached on two Sabbaths. The state of his health, however, prevented his baptizing two brethren who were received as candidates for that ordinance. In March, Rev. Wm. K. Mott commenced preaching for the church and continued his labors until the following Winter. His efforts were not in vain but were attended with immediate and marked results. The members were revived and a large number of the impenitent were led to seek salvation. He baptized three converts on his first visit, and twenty-five in April fol-

lowing, thus continuing to administer the ordinance from month to month, until the church reported to the Association in the following Autumn, 70 baptisms and 117 communicants. During this meeting discipline was also restored and delinquents were admonished. On the 29th of June, Messrs. Levi Sylvius, Robert Berry and Nathan Callender were chosen Deacons of the church. In September following Rev. James Clark again visited the place and soon after accepted the pastoral care of the church, dividing his labors chiefly between this and the Benton Church. He sustained this relation for some two years with great faithfulness. The church reported to the Association in the Fall of 1840, 13 baptisms and 126 communicants. On the 8th of May, 1841, Mr. Nathan Callender was licensed "to improve his gift in the Zion of God," and on the 5th of September following, Mr. James P. Stalbird was also granted "liberty to improve" in the same manner.

About this time Rev. William K. Mott became pastor of the church, dividing his labors between this field and that at Pittston. He continued to serve the cause in this relation during some six years with much efficiency and measurable success. In the Autumn of 1842, the church reported to the Association, 10 baptisms and 132 communicants. This was the culminating point in its numerical prosperity. On the 4th of April, 1843, 27 members were dismissed to form a church at Blakely. During this and a few subsequent years, a number of persons were excluded from the church. On the 3d of January, 1846, it was "resolved that, in the opinion of this church, a connection with

the Society called 'Odd Fellows,' is inconsistent with a standing and fellowship in the church of Jesus Christ." After an unpleasant experience, however, of some nine years, the church rescinded this resolution but not without giving great offence to some, especially to one of the Deacons, who immediately abandoned the church. On the 23d of June, 1847, Mr. Nathan Callender was ordained to the Gospel ministry by a council of brethren convened for that purpose. He succeeded Mr. Mott as supply of the church, but sustained that relation only a short period. The church reported to the Association in the following Autumn, one baptism and 91 communicants. It had received during this decade 108 persons by baptism.

The course of the church during the next ten years was quite uniform, presenting few changes and furnishing few incidents of especial interest or importance. In January, 1848, Rev. Daniel E. Bowen is named as pastor of the church. In the following month he took letters of dismission for himself and three sisters, for the purpose of uniting with a few others in forming an English church at Carbondale. From this time until October, 1849, the church was destitute of regular preaching, when the services of Mr. Wm. A. Miller were secured as a stated supply. On the 27th of March, 1850, he was ordained as pastor of the church, a relation he sustained until December, 1855, when he resigned his charge and retired from the field, generally esteemed as a faithful minister. Under his labors the cause was measurably prospered and frequent additions were received. During the Summer and Autumn of 1852, a gentle and general shower of grace descended

on the church and community. The members were graciously revived and a number of the impenitent were hopefully converted. The church reported to the Association in the Fall of that year, 27 baptisms and 107 communicants. In 1853, nine persons were received by baptism, increasing the total membership of the church to 112, a higher number than was reported in any subsequent year. On the 6th of Dec., 1855, the name of the church was changed from Greenfield to *Scott Valley*, to correspond with a change previously made in the name of the Township, and indicate the usual place of holding meetings. In May, 1856, the pastoral services of Rev. Rial Tower were secured for one-half of the time. He still labors for the church in that relation. The church reported to the Association in the following Autumn, 12 excluded and 65 as their total membership, reduced to 61 in the following year. In January, 1857, the name of Mr. M. L. Miller first occurs as clerk of the church in place of Mr. Wetherby, resigned and removed from the place. On the 23d of April of this year, their house of worship, a neat and commodious building, was dedicated in the midst of a snow storm so unpleasant that few attended the interesting services. During this closing decade 55 persons were added to the church by baptism, making a total of 215 since its organization.

FIRST CLIFFORD CHURCH.

At an early period, Baptist views, variously shaded, were introduced among the scattered settlers of an undefined region formerly known as "Elkwoods." It is, however, presumed that the present township of Clifford, Susquehanna county, Penna., embraces the southern portion of that region formerly designated by this suggestive name.

As early as 1802, Rev Epaphras Thompson, then pastor of the "First Baptist Church of Wayne county," commenced preaching occasionally in this portion of Elkwoods and adjacent settlements. His labors were blessed in the conversion of souls. A number of persons scattered over this wild region and baptized by Mr. Thompson, were received as members and organized as a branch of the church of which he was the esteemed pastor. Previous to the Summer of 1806, perhaps in the Spring of that year, Mr. Gideon Lewis, then living in Elkwoods, was ordained as an Evangelist with especial reference to the spiritual interests of this branch. The members gathered in this settlement under the labors of Messrs. Thompson and Lewis, practiced "Free Communion," but in other respects their principles and practices were in harmony with those of Regular Baptists.

In the Autumn of 1802, as is believed, Rev. John Miller, of Abington, also commenced preaching occasionally in the southern portion of Elkwoods. He held a meeting in the log cabin of Mr. Amos Harding, at what is now Clifford Corners, on the 4th Sabbath of June, 1803, and probably baptized one or more con-

verts. On the 2d Sabbath of July, 1804, Mr. Adam Miller and his wife, parents of Rev. Charles Miller, becoming dissatisfied with "free communion," were received as members of Abington Church, recommended by "Mr. Thompson's church as baptized persons." Others also residing in Elkwoods, perceiving the inconsistency of inviting to the Lord's Table such persons as they would not receive to membership in the church, broke from their moorings and drifted in the same direction. These and others who were baptized from time to time, were finally organized as a branch of Abington Church, with the privilege of holding covenant meetings and enjoying occasional preaching by the pastor of the parent church. Mr. James Hulse one of the principal Deacons of that church, lived in the Elkwoods and led the meetings of this branch when destitute of preaching. In 1812, Mr. Ira Justin united with this branch and soon commenced preaching for them, alternating with Rev. John Miller.

Thus Baptist principles were planted and pruned in this comparative wilderness, until a sufficient number of members were gathered and trained to organize as an independent body. In the midst of a gracious revival, a council of brethren from Abington, Palmyra, Mt. Pleasant, Bethany and Greenfield churches, was called to recognize them as a Gospel church. The council of recognition convened in the "Union School house," on Monday, October 20th, 1817, and organized by appointing Rev. John Miller moderator, and Mr. Ephraim Torrey clerk. Thirty-four persons then presented themselves with their letters of dismissal from Abington Church, together with their Articles of Faith and

Covenant, and after the usual examination, were recognized by the council as the Baptist Church of Clifford, by appropriate public services.

The church commenced its course with a prospect of much prosperity and usefulness. The clerk of the council made the following record in his private memorandum: "The glorious work is going on in a neighborhood lately notorious for vice and immorality." During the progress of this revival a comparatively large number were hopefully converted and admitted to membership. Mr. Ira Justin, a licentiate of the church continued to supply them with much acceptance. On the 15th of November following, Mr. James Reaves was appointed Deacon of the church—in the following year having taken a letter of dismission, he was succeeded in that office by Mr. Eliab Farnam who continued to serve the cause in that relation until his decease, March 30, 1854—a period of thirty-six years. When the church united with the Association in the Autumn of 1818, they reported 40 baptisms and 76 communicants. During the following year three persons were added to the church by baptism, increasing its membership to 83; in 1820, some 30 members were dismissed to form a Baptist Colony in the State of Ohio, leaving the church with but 55 communicants. In the Autumn of this year, the Association met for the first time with this church; on the second day of its session Mr. Ira Justin was ordained to the work of the ministry and as pastor of the church, a relation he sustained for some four years, at the close of which he resigned his charge and removed to Western New York. The church, left destitute of a pastor for some three years subse-

quent, gradually declined in spiritual life but remained nearly stationary as to numerical strength. In 1826, Mr. Charles Miller, one of the constituent members, began to "improve his gift" and supply the church. "At this point," says one, "we took courage and resolved to build a house for the worship of God. After holding two meetings for business, we secured a suitable site for the house and raised a subscription of nineteen dollars, payable to Charles Miller, in cash, labor and *maple sugar*. With this we commenced building; some of the high minded laughed at us but when they saw us go about the work with all hands and good courage, they came to our aid and gave us a pledge of five hundred dollars. This strengthened our hands and the Lord encouraged our hearts." The house was not yet completed in the Autumn of 1830. It was built of wood, 38 by 40 feet on the ground, at a total cost of about twelve hundred dollars. It is pleasantly situated in a small village at Clifford Corners.

The church entered upon the next ten years with ample facilities for increasing usefulness. They were erecting a convenient house of worship and enjoying a stated supply. In 1829, Rev. James Clark came to their aid and preached with marked success and faithfulness. Under his labors a number of sinners were hopefully converted. The church reported to the Association in the Fall of this year, 15 baptisms and 66 communicants. On the second day of the annual meeting of the Association, which was held with this church in the Autumn of 1830, Mr. Charles Miller was ordained to the ministry of the Word and as pastor of the church. He has sustained this relation with occasional intervals,

until the present time. He has uniformly enjoyed the esteem and confidence of the church and community. His labors and influence have not been entirely confined to his immediate charge but have extended over a comparatively wide field. Under his ministry the church enjoyed uniform prosperity and made gradual progress until 1834, when it was divided and distracted in its counsels by the influence of Anti-nomianism. This disturbance continued to annoy the church and retard its progress for some two or three years, during which a number of members, were excluded and but few were added by baptism. However, near the close of this decade, peace was restored and prosperity again began to smile on the cause.

The next ten years, commencing with 1838, embrace the most prosperous portion of the history of this church. This was the culminating period of its numerical strength. In 1839, a precious revival was enjoyed under the faithful labors of the pastor. "The Holy Spirit," says our informant, "was poured out like the dews of heaven," gently distilling and greatly refreshing the thirsty soil. The church reported to the Association in the Autumn of this year, 28 baptisms and 99 communicants—increased to 109 in the following year. Near the close of 1841, seven members were dismissed to unite in forming the Second Clifford Church. In February, 1843, Rev. Henry Curtis, of Bethany, came to the assistance of the pastor and "preached the Word with marked power." The church reported to the Association in the following Autumn, 13 baptisms and 113 communicants—its maximum number. In 1846 Mr. William A. Miller, son of

the pastor, was licensed to "improve his gift" in preaching the Gospel. In 1847, the pastor having been confined at home for a long time to watch by the bed-side of an invalid wife, Rev. Almon Virgil accepted an invitation to supply the church one-half of the time for one year. Under his efficient labors the church prosperously closed its third decade.

In 1848 the church entered upon the concluding ten years of its history with 100 communicants. This period is marked by a general and gradual decline in numerical prosperity. The pastor, Rev. Charles Miller, continued to supply the church so far as his domestic afflictions would permit. In 1850 Mr. Robert P. Hartly, a licentiate, accepted an invitation to preach for the church for one year. He was ordained as pastor, May 1st, 1851, but soon resigned his charge and removed from the field. This was followed by a season of refreshing, during which a number of persons professed faith in Christ and identified themselves with his cause. In the Summer of this year eight members were dismissed to unite with others in forming the Union Church at East Clifford. The church reported to the Association in the following Autumn, 15 dismissions, 16 baptisms and 99 communicants. Few changes marked the course of the church until 1856, when Rev. Wm. A. Miller is reported as pastor of the church. They say in their letter to the Association of this year, that they are surrounded by various isms, and great dearth prevails in their midst, which have checked the growth, if not endangered the lives of the plants of grace. They are, however, encouraged by the promise, "They that be planted in the house of the Lord, shall

flourish in the courts of our God." Their former pastor, Rev. Charles Miller, on account of peculiar cares, has retired from active service, but they enjoy the pastoral labors of Rev. William A. Miller one-half of the time. In 1857, Rev A. O. Stearns became pastor of the church, dividing his labors between this and the Union Church. They report to the Association in the Autumn of this year, 16 erasures and 62 communicants, and say in their letter that Father Charles Miller continues to preach for them occasionally as health and strength permit. It is now forty years since this church was constituted. During that time, besides those already named, the following brethren have served as Deacons, each but for a short time, on account of removals and other causes, viz., James Wells, David Mackey, Alfred Merriman and D. W. Halsted. Mr. Franklin Finn, elected to this office, February 20th, 1841, still serves the cause in that capacity. Also, during that period 175 persons have been baptized into the fellowship of this church.

FIRST DAMASCUS CHURCH.

In the Autumn of 1820, Rev. John Smitzer visited Damascus and vicinity, but was not invited to preach on account of his views on the limitations of communion. However, after a mission of four weeks in Bethany and adjacent settlements, on his return to New York he called at the residence of Mr. Stephen Mitchell, who was not then a professor of religion. His wife, however, had once belonged to the same church with Mr. Smitzer, who had been appointed to labor with her for uniting with a Free Communion Baptist church. At this interview he also formed the acquaintance of three other sisters of that society, with whom he held a protracted conversation, at the close of which he assured them that the time would come when some Presbyterian minister would preach to a church of that order, and hold up the ordinance of baptism by immersion as most absurd and ridiculous, and then invite them to the communion. These sisters would not admit that such a circumstance could ever occur. It, however, did occur some six weeks from the time the prediction was made, which so grieved these four sisters that they retired to the burying ground near the meeting house and gave vent to their feelings in mutual tears. This cured them of open communion. A number of others belonging to the Free Communion Baptist church soon sympathized with them in their trials, and finally adopted similar opinions, among whom were Rev. Enoch Owen, and Mr. David Corwin, since an able minister of the Gospel.

Early in the Autumn of the following year, Mr.

Smitzer having been appointed by the Missionary Society in New York, to labor in Wayne county, Pennsylvania, again visited Damascus and commenced preaching with marked efficiency and success. Under his labors a number of the impenitent were soon hopefully converted, and some twelve persons, formerly connected with other churches, were organized as a regular Baptist church, adopting the Articles of Faith and church covenant of the Bethel Baptist Church of New York. A council of recognition was convened at Damascus, Wayne county, Pennsylvania, August 26th, 1821, composed, as is believed, of Rev. Elijah Peck, of Mt. Pleasant, Deas. Ephraim Torrey and Osborn Olmsted and Mr. Jonathan Jennings of Bethany. Nineteen persons, five males and fourteen females, seven of whom were baptized in the Delaware by Mr. Smitzer on the same day, presented themselves with their Articles of Faith and were recognized as the regular Baptist church of Damascus, by appropriate and impressive religious services. The sermon was preached by Mr. Smitzer from Zech. iv: 10. "For who hath despised the day of small things," after which the crowded congregation for greater convenience, withdrew from the * meeting house to an adjoining grove, under whose overshadowing trees with their wide spreading branches, this little band, with

* This meeting house, the first owned and occupied by any church of the Association, was built in 1800, by Dea. Thomas Shields, of Philadelphia, and with the lot on which it stands, deeded to certain persons in trust for the use of a Regular Baptist church and society when organized. Accordingly, soon after the Damascus Church was organized, a charter was obtained, and trustees were appointed, to whom the house and lot were deeded. This house was occupied for years by the church and is still standing on the north side of the turnpike, near a quarter of a mile west of the present meeting house, as a lasting monument to the far reaching faith of its benevolent donor.

united hearts and hands, entered into solemn covenant with God and each other. The hand of fellowship was then extended to them by Rev. Elijah Peck, on behalf of the council. The congregation now returned to the meeting house, when the church and council united in celebrating the Lord's Supper, after which these solemn services were closed by singing the Union Hymn, commencing, "From whence doth this union arise."

Thus organized and provided with a pastor, under whose labors they had been gathered, the brethren proceeded to appoint other necessary officers. On the 8th of September, Mr. Jonathan Yerkes was chosen clerk, and on the 3d of the next November, Mr. Isaac Brown was unanimously elected Deacon of the church. At a subsequent meeting delegates were appointed to represent the church at the Association, in the Autumn of 1822, and request admission into that body. The request was granted and the church with 44 communicants was admitted into the Association, Rev. Enoch Owen, one of their messengers, receiving the hand of fellowship.

At a meeting for business, October 12th, of that year, Mr. David Corwin related his exercises before the church, with reference to the work of the ministry. The brethren were at first in much doubt as to granting him a license, since he was afflicted with an impediment in his speech and was also quite illiterate, being unable to even read a hymn or a chapter intelligibly. He, however, was not offended or disheartened. Upon the second or third trial he stood up before the church with tears and declared in the fervor of his soul, that it was the absorbing and controlling desire of his heart

to preach the everlasting Gospel, it being his solemn and abiding conviction that God, by his Holy Spirit, was calling him to this great and glorious work, but if this privilege should be denied him, he had delivered his own soul; the entire and fearful responsibility was now rolled upon the church. The appeal was effectual. He was finally licensed to preach the Gospel. From this period, by diligent study and constant exercise of his ministerial gifts, he began to rapidly improve in knowledge and efficiency. He has since been the successful pastor of a number of large churches in an adjoining State and is still an able and influential minister of the New Testament. The writer remembers meeting him, perhaps in 1852, at "Burnt Hills," in New York, when he heard him declare in presence of a number of his brethren in the ministry, in fitting and fervent words, his increasing love and appreciation of the responsible work of the Christian ministry. Raising his manly form, with a smile on his countenance, he said in substance that the longer he preached the Gospel, the more he loved the work; it was, indeed, a great privilege, an exalted service, worthy of the tongue and talents of an Angel. Such was, and is, David Corwin.

On the 7th of December, 1822, Mr. Stephen Mitchell was chosen Deacon of the church, and on the 8th of February following, he was ordained to that office, together with Mr. Isaac Brown, previously appointed. The ordaining prayer was offered by Mr. Owen, and the charge to the candidates was given by the pastor. The Association met with this church for the first time, in the Autumn of 1824, when they report 12 received by baptism and 86 as their total membership. On the 9th

of July, 1825, Mr. John T. Mitchell was chosen clerk of the church, in place of Mr. Jonathan Yerkes, resigned.

On the 11th of March, 1826, Mr. Smitzer resigned his charge of the church and retired from the Association. Under his faithful labors the church had been formed and fostered. During the first year of his settlement, he supplied this church once a month, devoting the remainder of his time to the cause in Bethany and Canaan. During the subsequent years, his labors were equally divided between this and Bethany Church. For the first four years a constant revival was enjoyed in the Damascus Church; but two covenant meetings occurring without some one or more asking admission, and but four months passing without some one or more being baptized. Thus the church grew and members multiplied under his zealous labors. Among the apparent causes of his efficiency and success, aside from his preaching, were his pastoral visits from house to house, and particular care to exercise a faithful discipline.

The church was now destitute of a pastor, but was supplied a portion of the time by Rev. Enoch Owen, a resident minister and constituent member. Rev. Horace Jones was the second pastor of the church. His labors commenced in May, 1827, and continued about three years. During the first two years a portion of his time was devoted to the interests of the cause at Canaan. Under his labors few changes occurred in the church of general interest. On the 24th of April, 1830, Mr. Samuel Hedden was chosen Deacon of the church and still holds that office.

Rev. Charles H. Hubbard was the third pastor of the church. He sustained this relation from December, 1830, to February, 1834, a period of about three years. His labors were chiefly divided between this and the Bethany Church. During a temporary absence from the people of his charge, the pulpit was supplied by Mr. Robert C. Brisbane, a licensed minister. In the year 1832, the church erected a house of worship, which was dedicated November 7th, of the same year. But two ministers were present, the pastor and Rev. Zelotes Grenell, of Orange County, New York. The latter preached the dedication sermon from Ps. 26: 8. The following record is from the pen of the pastor. "According to previous appointment, the meeting was continued during seven days. Brethren in the ministry expected, did not arrive, and Bro. Grenell was under the necessity of leaving on the second day of the meeting. The friends of Zion began to tremble for the result of the effort, yet urgently sought help at the throne of grace. God heard and answered prayer; his Spirit 'came down like rain on the mown grass.' A number of backsliders were reclaimed, and impenitent hopefully converted during the meeting, and at its close others were still inquiring the way to Zion."

In January, 1832, the pastor was aided in a series of meetings by Rev. Joseph H. Chamberlain; also in February, 1834, a meeting of days was held, conducted chiefly by Revs. Henry Curtis, S. P. Griswold and J. H. Chamberlain, during which a refreshing shower of grace descended on this thirsty hill of Zion. "The preaching," as the record runs, "was heart-searching, and many seemed to feel the force of truth, the full

effects of which will be known only at the last day." On the 14th of May of that year, Mr. Alfred B. Hubbard was ordained to the work of the ministry, and on the 19th of August following, *Mr. Bezaleel Tyler was chosen Deacon of the church.

After the resignation of Mr. Charles H. Hubbard, the church was destitute of stated preaching until April, 1835, when Rev. Smith Bixby was chosen as their fourth pastor. He sustained this relation until December, 1836, when he sickened and died, while on a visit to his friends in Susquehanna county, loved and lamented by the church and community. At the time of his decease the church embraced 84 communicants. During an interim of some nine months, the pulpit was supplied by Mr. John T. Mitchell, who had received license to preach in 1834. In November, 1837, Rev.

* When Mr. Tyler offered himself to the church for membership, in 1822 or '23, he related the following dream which has been strikingly fulfilled. He had long felt that it was his duty to be baptized, but was in doubt as to the propriety of what is called Close Communion. He read and conversed on the subject but was still left in doubts and darkness. His Bible and conscience seemed to direct him to the Regular Baptist Church, but his feelings and friends urged him to unite with another denomination. Finally one evening while in this dilemma, feeling especially anxious to know and do the will of God, he prayed earnestly that the Lord would reveal his duty to him in a dream. Accordingly that night in his sleep he dreamed that he was in a field harvesting corn. After completing three shocks and considering them as so many denominations—the shock on the right representing the Free Will Baptist Church, that on the left the Presbyterian Church, and that in the center the Regular Baptist Church—he knelt near by them and prayed that the Lord would show him his duty, after which he sat down to await and witness the result. Presently he saw a number of stalks from the shock on the right fall off and pass over to the shock in the centre, thus continuing until the shock on the right was so reduced that it fell on the ground. He also saw a few stalks from the shock on the left fall away and unite with that in the centre, and what remained soon became dry and husky. When he awoke he felt that though it was only a dream yet it was in answer to prayer and should satisfy his mind as to his duty. He accordingly offered himself to the First Damascus Church, the one represented by the shock in the centre.

Joseph Currin became the fifth pastor of the church, and continued to serve the cause in that relation until April, 1839, when the church report some 80 as their total membership. August 25th, 1838, was observed as a day of fasting and prayer in view of the low state of Zion. During the ensuing Autumn, some 15 souls were hopefully converted and gathered into the fold of Christ.

Rev. Henry Curtis was the sixth pastor of this church. His labors commenced in May, 1839, and were divided between this and the Bethany Church. In the following Autumn, the Association held its second meeting with this church. On the 23d of November following, Mr. Geo. S. Young was chosen clerk of the church, in place of Mr. John T. Mitchell, who was ordained on the 28th of the same month, to the work of the ministry, Rev. John Miller moderator of the council, preaching the sermon from Acts 11: 24. In January, 1840, a series of meetings were held, in which the abundant labors of the pastor, aided by Rev. Wm. K. Mott, were greatly blessed in the descent of the Spirit and conversion of souls. Special labor was subsequently performed by the pastor, in connection with some of the members in the vicinity of Ten Mile River. The Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon that hitherto neglected neighborhood and many believing, were baptized. As the result of these labors chiefly, a church was constituted in that place on the 18th of the following August, with 29 communicants. In March, 1841, the pastor, aided by Mr. Mitchell, held a meeting of days in the "South Settlement," within the bounds of the church, in which the people of God, in that sec-

tion, were refreshed and made to rejoice in beholding repenting sinners turning to God. In the Autumn of 1843, the Association convened for the third time with this church. In February, 1844, the pastor, aided by some Aarons and Hurs, labored for some weeks in the destitute district of Callicoon, New York. The efforts of the servants of God were blessed, and their hearts made to rejoice in an abundant harvest of souls. Not only in that place was the power of God manifested, but the Holy Spirit, like one continuous wave of mercy, passed over this entire region, refreshing the hearts of the people of God and sweetly inclining many of the ungodly to seek the salvation of their souls. In February, 1845, Mr. John S. Dodge was licensed to "improve his ministerial gifts in the doctrine of our Lord wherever God in his providence may open a door." On the 15th of June, 1847, a church was organized at Callicoon, of 21 members, dismissed chiefly from this church. On the 3d of February, 1849, Rev. Henry Curtis resigned his charge of the church and retired from the field, where he had preached the Gospel for some ten years with unabated zeal and unusual success. The church at this time embraced upwards of 100 communicants.

After a brief interim, the services of Rev. John T. Mitchell were engaged for six months, commencing on the 16th of June following. In view of the deadly cholera and other diseases that were sweeping over the country, the first Friday of the ensuing August was appointed and observed as a season of fasting, humiliation and prayer to God that he would graciously restrain his righteous judgments and remember mercy in

deserving wrath. Early in 1850, Mr. Wm. C. Ulyat, a licentiate, supplied the desk for some eight or ten weeks. By request, Mr. Mitchell continued his labors until May of that year, when Rev. Truman O. Judd became the seventh pastor of the church. He sustained this relation for two years. On the 19th of December, 1851, a church was constituted in West Damascus of 11 members, formerly connected with this church. In the Autumn of that year, the church report three added by baptism and 104 as their total membership, and also say in their letter to the Association, that they are grateful for the faithful ministrations of the Word, but confess their neglect of the important duties it inculcates. Social intercourse has been withheld, and Christian confidence seems to be relaxing. Mr. Judd resigned his charge of the church in May, 1852, and retired from the Association.

Rev. Andrew Hopper was the eighth pastor of the church. His labors commenced in the Spring of 1852, and continued until December, 1854. In February, 1853, Mr. George Lukens was appointed clerk of the church in place of Mr. Young, resigned. During this month a series of meetings were held by the pastor, resulting in great good, verifying the promise, "I will be as the dew unto Israel." In the Autumn of 1854, the church report to the Association eight received by baptism and 91 as their total membership, and also say in their letter that they deplore the want of consistency in some, yet they have been measurably revived. Two have been restored to fellowship, and a few souls have been hopefully converted and added to the church. Since May last, they have enjoyed the labors of their pastor only one-half of the time.

Rev. John C. Shearman was the ninth pastor of this church. He had formerly been a minister among the Six Principle Baptists, but coinciding in his views with the Regular Baptists, he was admitted to membership in the Damascus Church, and subsequently recognized as a minister of the Gospel by a council of brethren convened for that purpose. He supplied the church once in two weeks, for some time previous to May, 1855, when his entire services were secured. Under his efficient labors, confidence was restored and the cause revived. At a covenant meeting held in March of that year, Mr. Abijah M. Calkin, for some twenty years a worthy member of the Presbyterian church of Cohecton, N. Y., offered himself for membership, and was unanimously received. He was baptized by the pastor on the 22d of April following, and was soon after licensed to preach the Gospel. He was ordained to the work of the ministry November 28th, 1855, by a council of brethren invited for that purpose. In the Summer of that year, the church purchased a lot pleasantly situated on the west bank of the Delaware, a few rods below the meeting house, and erected on it a tasty and convenient parsonage, through the efforts of the pastor and liberality of brethren and friends. A series of meetings were commenced in January, 1856, and continued for 90 days, conducted by the pastor, assisted by Mr. Calkin, then principal of the Union Academy of Damascus. During the progress, however, of the meetings he resigned his connection with the school and devoted his entire efforts to the ministry. When the meetings commenced the members of the church were comparatively cold and careless, but were soon moved

to earnest prayer and effort for the salvation of souls. Their cry was heard and labors blessed. A large number of the impenitent were constrained to seek an interest in Christ and devote themselves to his service. The church report to the Association of that year, 50 received by baptism and 130 as their total membership. In May of this year, Messrs. Nathan Tyler and William E. Raymond were chosen Deacons of the church, and subsequently ordained to that office. In November following, Mr. Shearman resigned his charge of the church and retired from the field, highly respected by the brethren and community. Rev. A. M. Calkin now became the tenth and sole pastor of the church, a relation he still sustains with general acceptance. The Association held its semi-centennial anniversary with this church in the Autumn of 1857, when they report 6 received by baptism and 132 as their total membership. After welcoming the Association to their house and homes, they say in their letter that they have enjoyed a good degree of union and harmony; the Spirit of the Lord still lingers in their midst, yet they fear that the spirit of the world is making some inroads. They mourn the death of Mr. Moses Thomas and three others. Mr. Thomas died February 19th, of this year, on the same day that Rev. John Miller of Abington finished his course; the one a pioneer member; the other a pioneer minister.

SCOTT CHURCH.

The township of Scott is situated on the western side of the Delaware river, in the north-eastern corner of Pennsylvania, and embraces the extreme northern portion of Wayne county. Near the close of the eighteenth century, settlements were commenced in this wilderness by a hardy and industrious population, chiefly from New England. In addition to the necessary work of securing comfortable homes, by opening the forest and erecting log houses and barns, many of the pioneers spent a portion of their time in hunting and fishing, while the more energetic and enterprising occupied the Winter and Spring seasons in lumbering and rafting. It is not uncommon to read in the early records of this church during the months of March and April: "No covenant meeting—most of the brethren gone down the river."

Among the early settlers of this region was a number of regular Baptists. Mr. Ezekiel Sampson, a licensed minister, was one of the pioneers of this wilderness. As early as January 1st, 1796, he rode on horseback some twenty miles, guided by marked trees, and officiated at the first marriage in Mt. Pleasant. The parties were Mr. Silas Kellogg and the eldest daughter of Mr. Jirah Mumford. Messrs. John and Benjamin Whitaker were also among the early settlers of this vicinity, and were esteemed members of the Baptist church of Tompkins—now Deposit—up the river in the State of New York, the former of whom is still living, at an advanced age. It was this John Whitaker who so generously carried a stranger across

the Delaware river, on his shoulders, in the Autumn of 1801. He knew not at the time how unnecessary was the service rendered,—for this traveler was never after accustomed to fear or avoid water—or how much native shrewdness, restless energy and Baptist influence, he was forwarding into Pennsylvania. That stranger was Mr. John Miller, then on his way to seek a home in Abington.

The Scott Church was recognized, November 5th, 1823, with 14 constituent members, by a council of brethren convened at the house of Mr. Squire Whitaker for that purpose, from the following churches, viz., From Tompkins—Benjamin Coburn, John and Benjamin Whitaker; from Masonville—John B. Ballard, John Balcom and Lewis Schofield; from Windsor—Samuel Buel and Asa Hoadly; from Mt. Pleasant—Rev. Elijah Peck, Rufus, Homer and Ovid Grennell; from Bethany—David Bunnell; and from Damascus—Rev. John Smitzer. Among the constituent members were Ezekiel Sampson, Squire Whitaker, Jirah Mumford, Jr., and his wife Mary. The last two had recently been baptized, the first in the settlement who went forward in that ordinance, and they now bore letters of commendation from the Mt. Pleasant Church.

At the first covenant meeting held by this church on the 22d of the above month, Mr. Jirah Mumford, Jr., was appointed Deacon, and Mr. Squire Whitaker clerk; Mr. Charles Matteer was also received as a candidate for membership and baptized perhaps on the following day by Rev. Jason Corwin, of the Franklin Association. On the 21st of February, 1824, Messrs. James Mumford, Henry H. and George Sampson were admit-

ted as candidates for baptism, and baptized by Rev. John Smitzer, of Bethany. The church now embraced 18 members, the number reported when it was received into the Association in the Fall of this year.

During the following five years few changes marked or marred the course of the church. Covenant and other meetings were statedly held, usually in private dwellings and frequently at the house of Mr. James Hanford, who had not yet become a member of the church. Rev. Ezekiel Sampson was their chief supply; Revs. John Smitzer, James Clark and Elijah Peck also preached for the church occasionally. Some four persons were added by baptism during this period, and in the Autumn of 1829 the church reported 25 communicants. Early in the following Winter tokens of good were apparent. A broken series of meetings were held in the place by Rev. Michael Frederick, of Great Bend, Pennsylvania, aided by Rev. Charles H. Hubbard, of Bethany. The name of Rev. G. W. Leonard also frequently occurs in this connection, and during most of the following year. The members of the church were revived, backsliders reclaimed and a comparatively large number of sinners were hopefully converted. In the Fall of 1830, the church reported 31 baptisms and 58 communicants, more than doubling its membership. The following abstract from their letter to the Association was printed in the minutes: "The church at Scott, during the past year, have been blessed with a powerful revival and efficacious work of grace. They have formed a Temperance Society, which embraces most of the inhabitants. This church is also a Missionary Society and will raise from seven-

ty-five to a hundred dollars for Domestic Missions. They are now destitute of a pastor." On the 1st of December, 1839, in the midst of this revival, Mr. Squire Whitaker was appointed second Deacon, and Mr. James Mumford clerk of the church, and on the 29th of the same month, the two Deacons previously appointed, were ordained to that office, Revs. Frederick, Hubbard and Leonard officiating on that occasion.

During the following ten years, the church experienced peculiar and painful trials. Some of the members, becoming cold and careless, neglected their covenant vows and indulged a contentious spirit. This unfaithfulness was not confined to the younger and less experienced members, but affected some of the older and more able, reaching even to the Deacons of the church. By the exercise of a somewhat tardy discipline, some of the wandering and disaffected were reached and reclaimed, but others persisting in their unfaithfulness, were finally and reluctantly excluded. In 1831, Rev. James Clark preached occasionally for the church, and the services of Rev. Ezekiel Sampson were enjoyed on the first and second Sabbath of each month. The name also of Mr. Charles A. Fox, a licentiate of Bethany church, occurs once and again in the records of this year, indicating that he was present and perhaps preached. In 1833, Mr. David Benedict was appointed clerk of the church, and in the Autumn of this year, the Association held its twenty-sixth Anniversary at Scott, and was "greeted with a hearty welcome." In February, 1835, Rev. Isaac D. Jones commenced laboring for this church

one-quarter of the time, and continued to faithfully serve them during some three years. In December of this year he held a brief series of meetings, aided by Rev. Henry Curtis, resulting in a few conversions and some four additions to the church by baptism. The name of Rev. J. W. Parker also occurs occasionally in this connection. In the Autumn of 1837, the church represented their condition to the Association as follows: "We have enjoyed the labors of Elder I. D. Jones one-quarter of the time during the past year. Brother Ezekiel Sampson still continues to labor with us in word and doctrine. At our last covenant meeting one female related her experience and was received as a candidate for baptism—she dated her first serious impressions about two years ago, to a protracted meeting conducted by Brother Curtis, in our settlement."

In March, 1839, Rev. J. J. Fuller became pastor of the church, a relation he sustained through the current year. His labors were greatly blessed in strengthening the church and leading sinners to Christ. At a covenant meeting, held on the 26th of October of this year, the pastor and Rev. D. D. Gray being present, thirteen persons, eight males and five females, offered themselves for membership, and were baptized by the pastor on the following day. Some of these were old hoppers but most were young converts. The Lord's Supper was then administered, and the record of the day closed as follows: "The Lord is doing great things for us whereof we are glad. Blessed be His holy name forever and ever." On the 30th of this month, three more were baptized, and also on the 24th of November following, three others went forward in that ordinance. On the

22d of May, 1840, Albert O. Hanford was appointed clerk, and in the following Autumn, the church reported 21 baptisms and 56 communicants.

The next ten years were distinguished by various changes, both of a pleasant and painful character. Mr. Silas Finn, a licensed minister, labored for the church a portion of the time during 1841. Rev. James Spencer became pastor of the church in the Summer of 1843, a relation he sustained for a number of years. In the Autumn of this year the records present evidence of an awakening among the members of the church. On the 28th of October, the covenant meeting was quite fully attended, and it seems to have been a season of much interest and encouragement. "The brethren and sisters," as the record runs, "were revived in the temper of their minds and resolved to go on, by the help of God, and to be oftener found at the feet of Jesus, imploring the influence of his Spirit." This season seems to have been followed by a protracted effort, resulting in much good to the cause. On the 17th of February, 1844, "after receiving a refreshing from the presence of the Lord, the church met for the examination of candidates for baptism." Four persons were accepted and baptized by the pastor on the following Sabbath. On the 25th of this month five more persons went forward in the ordinance of baptism. Others followed from time to time during the following month. On the 27th of April, Mr. Wm. Sampson was appointed clerk, soon after, however, succeeded by Mr. David Benedict, who had previously served the church in that capacity. In the Fall of this year the church reported to the Association 14 baptisms and 63 communicants. During the

next three years nothing occurred in the course of the church worthy of especial notice. At a church meeting held on the 19th of January, 1848, "a committee was appointed to call on Elder Spencer and inquire into reports in circulation against his ministerial and Christian character." This was followed by a council on the 10th of May subsequent, which, however, arrived at no definite conclusion as to the merits of the case, but "feeling the weighty truth that in the multitude of counsellors there is safety, recommend the church to call another and larger council." The church, however, did not act upon this recommendation, but proceeded on the 26th of August following to exclude Mr. Spencer from the church, "he having, by unchristian conduct, forfeited his Christian and ministerial character." The shock seems to have staggered the church and disheartened many of its members. During 1849 an occasional covenant meeting was held and but thinly attended.

On the 26th of January, 1850, a covenant meeting was held, when the following hopeful record was made: "The brethren and sisters present were in union, and manifested a desire for the prosperity of the church. Elder Tower came in after the meeting commenced." He was also present at the covenant meeting held on the 23d of March following, when one person was received on experience, two by letter, and one as a candidate for baptism; the ordinance was administered on the following day by Rev. Rial Tower, who, with Rev. Silas Finn, continued to preach for the church from time to time, during most of this year. On the 26th of April, 1851, Mr. O. L. Hall, a licensed minister, was present at the covenant meeting, and on the 24th of the

following month united with the church. Under his labors, the church was somewhat revived, and a number of accessions were received. Mr. N. M. Benedict was appointed clerk, and in the Autumn of this year, the church reported to the Association five baptisms and 60 communicants. On the 22d of November, Mr. Hall took a letter of dismissal, and Messrs. James Mumford and Benjamin Sampson were elected Deacons of the church.

The remaining portion of the history of this church will, perhaps, be fairly represented in the following abstracts of their annual letters to the Association. In the Fall of 1852 the church was destitute of a pastor, but had enjoyed occasional visits during the year from ministering brethren. They mourned the death of two aged and honored members, Dea. Jirah Mumford and Henry Sampson. In the Autumn of 1853, they said that Rev. Rial Tower had preached for them a part of the past year and his labors had been blessed. Rev. J. B. Worden was preaching for them one-fourth of the time, and they had a flourishing Sabbath school and a large supply of books. In October of this year, Rev. J. W. Vanhorn commenced laboring on this field with marked success. On the 23d of this month, near twenty persons were baptized into the fellowship of the church, and "all felt," as the record runs, "to rejoice in the refreshing from the presence of the Lord." A number of wanderers were also restored, and others were baptized from time to time. The church entered upon the year 1854 greatly revived and strengthened. They reported to the Association in the following Autumn, 35 additions and 91 communicants. This plea-

sant state of things, however, was soon sadly marred. Early in the year 1855, rumors were afloat prejudicial to the moral character of the pastor. On the 3d of February, a committee was appointed to investigate the reports in circulation against Mr. Vanhorn, but seem to have failed to establish their truth. His wickedness, however, soon became so notorious that the church, on the 17th of March following, were constrained to promptly exclude him from their fellowship. During the remaining portion of this year the church enjoyed an occasional sermon by Rev. E. C. Cook, as it seems, from the appearance of his name in the records. In the Fall of 1856, the church reported to the Association 83 members, and said in their letter that they yet exist as a church, though feeble indeed and almost in despair. In consequence of failure on the part of pretended spiritual guides, many of them have neglected their duty, broken their vows to Christ and the church, and refused to aid in supporting the Gospel. They have Rev. H. Sherwood, late of New York, laboring for them one-fourth of the time, and maintain an interesting Sabbath school. They ask the prayers and sympathy of their brethren. During the year 1857, the church still reeling under repeated strokes, fails to rally or represent itself to the Association. The field, however, is still promising, and faithful brethren and sisters remain, and will, it is confidently hoped, yet gather up their strength and gird themselves for the conflict on the scene of their former trials and triumphs.

LENOX CHURCH.

The Baptist church in Lenox, Susquehanna county, Pennsylvania, was recognized December 15th, 1830, with thirteen constituent members, five males and eight females, by a council called for that purpose from Abington, Clifford, Jackson and Gibson, Harford and Bridgewater churches. Rev. Davis Dimock, of Montrose officiated as moderator, and Mr. Ezra Wall, of Abington, acted as clerk of the council.

On the 26th of March, 1831, Mr. Levi M. Mack was licensed to preach the Gospel, and on the 14th of September following, he was ordained as pastor of the church. He sustained this relation until the Autumn of 1833, when he took a letter of dismission and emigrated to the West. Under his pastoral labors the church was comparatively prosperous, and nine were added to its membership by letter and baptism. The church was now left destitute of a settled pastor but continued to sustain public worship on the Sabbath. The exercises were conducted by lay brethren, and usually consisted in prayer, conference and reading sermons. Rev. Charles Miller, of Clifford, preached occasionally for the church and administered the ordinances. Little progress was made from 1835 to '37, and few additions were reported. The Sabbath and covenant meetings were sparsely attended on account of the locality of some and coldness of others, yet a few members continued firm to their purpose and faithful to their profession. In February of 1837, an earnest effort was made to revive the languishing cause. The prayer of faith was answered and the labors of the

faithful were blessed. A number of persons were brought to Christ, seven of whom were baptized on a profession of their faith, and received as members of the church. They report to the Association of that year twenty-six as their total membership.

In February of 1838, Mr. Rial Tower was appointed Deacon of the church, Dea. John Robinson having removed from the vicinity. During this year, Mr. Geo. W. Schofield preached for the church as a supply. Under his labors the cause was strengthened and sinners were converted. They reported to the Association 19 added by baptism and 41 as their total membership. On the 27th of October of that year, Dea. Rial Tower received license to preach the Gospel, and accepted an invitation to supply the church. During 1839 and '40, the church experienced some trials, and finally convened an advisory council, but with what result, we are not informed. The cause, however, seems to have received little if any advantage. On the 22d of August, 1840, Mr. Zerah Scott resigned his office as Deacon of the church, and Mr. Freeman Tingley was appointed to fill the vacancy, a position he still occupies with much ability and general acceptance. In December of 1841, Rev. D. D. Gray, of Jackson, visited the church by request and commenced a series of meetings which resulted in the restoration of comparative peace and harmony. A number of the impenitent were hopefully converted, and in the year following seven were added to the church by baptism. In 1843 one was baptized and some were excluded. On the 22d of August, 1844, Dea. Rial Tower was ordained to the work of the ministry and as pastor of the church, Rev. J. B. Worden

officiating as moderator of the ordination council, and Rev. Silas Finn acting as clerk. Mr. Tower has continued to serve the church as pastor, with occasional intervals, up to the present time. In the Spring of 1845, he was assisted by Rev. Silas Finn in a series of meetings. The church was revived and sinners were converted. In April of that year the pastor baptized five persons into the fellowship of the church. In January of the following year, Rev. D. F. Leach also aided the pastor in a meeting which continued some three weeks. It resulted in little apparent good to the community, yet the members of the church were partially aroused and revived. Nothing further of especial interest transpired in the church until 1850, when some were excluded and others dismissed. In 1851 the pastor resigned the charge of the church, and an effort was made to secure the services of another minister, but ultimately failed. In the following year, however, the church engaged the services of Rev. Charles Miller as an occasional supply. He administered the Lord's Supper regularly and preached as often as other duties would permit. On the 29th of April, 1853, Mr. Tower, at the request of the church, resumed the pastoral charge, and preached with renewed zeal and success. The congregations increased and tokens for good were apparent. In the Autumn of that year Mr. E. A. Francis, an Evangelist, came into the vicinity and held meetings during a number of weeks at various points within the bounds of the church. His labors were earnest and arduous. The meetings resulted in the hopeful conversion of a number of the impenitent, some

of whom belonged to the family of the pastor. Ten were baptized and united with the church.

The remaining portion of the history of the church will, perhaps, be fairly represented by a few extracts from their annual letters to the Association. They say in their letter of 1854, that they have passed through scenes of joy and sorrow—joy over the conversion of sinners, and sorrow for the exclusion of some of their number. However, love and harmony prevail; they have an interesting Sabbath School and female prayer meeting, and are doing something for the cause of temperance. They add in 1855, that they are favored with the labors of their pastor most of the time, and occasional visits of other ministering brethren. They do not sustain a Sabbath School, and covenant meetings are but thinly attended. Again they say in 1856, that the year past has not been one of uninterrupted prosperity, yet numerous blessings have been bestowed. They are favored with the labors of their pastor one-half of the time; his labors are well received and it is hoped will result in great good. Covenant meetings are usually well attended and the prayer meeting, Bible Class and Sabbath School, are in a prosperous and promising condition. Finally, in 1857, they say their members are few and much scattered; while some are detained from the sanctuary by poor health, others seem to wish to be excused. Mr. Tower continues to preach for them one-half of the time. They anticipate building a house of worship, which is much needed by the church and community.

CLINTON CHURCH.

In 1814 or '15, Rev. Elijah Peck, pastor of the Mt. Pleasant Church, commenced preaching, once a month, at the house of Mr. Levi Norton, in Canaan—now Clinton—Wayne county, Pennsylvania. In his absence, meetings were conducted by Dea. Rufus Grennell, at this and other places in the vicinity. At this time the region was so wild and the population so scattered, that many were obliged, in attending meetings, to travel for miles over bridle paths guided by blazed trees through the dense forest. Mr. Peck continued his visits for some seven or eight years. During this period, a few, residing in this vicinity, were baptized into the fellowship of the Mt. Pleasant Church.

Rev. John Smitzer, pastor of the Bethany Church, was the next preacher in this settlement. His labors commenced in 1823, and were enjoyed at intervals, for some two or three years. He baptized a large number of persons, considering the sparceness of the population. Rev. Horace Jones, pastor of Damascus Church, succeeded him and preached statedly during most of 1827 and '28. Mr. Thomas Teasdale, a licentiate of Newton Church, New Jersey, next supplied the brethren in Canaan for a few months. Rev. Charles H. Hubbard also preached for them one-fourth of the time, for two or three years. Mr. Alexander Smith commenced laboring on this field in the Winter of 1830-'31, and was ordained in the following Summer. The ordination services were held in the barn of Dea. Rufus Grennell. Revs. Jones, Hubbard, Teasdale and Smith, were employed and paid by the brethren residing in Canaan.

Having procured letters of dismissal from the Mt. Pleasant Church, "the brethren and sisters" residing in Canaan, met on the 23d of October, 1831, at the house of Dea. Rufus Grennell, "to consider the propriety of calling a council of brethren from sister churches" to recognize them as a "separate church of Christ," Rufus Grennell officiating as moderator and D. S. West as clerk. The moderator and clerk, with Mr. Charles A. Fox, were appointed a committee to report a Covenant, Articles of Faith and Practice, at an adjourned meeting to be held on the 4th of November following, and Rev. Alexander Smith, of Franklin, New York, was "particularly requested to visit us and sit in council at the time appointed for the recognition services." On the 4th of November, the brethren met pursuant to adjournment and heard and adopted a Covenant, Articles of Faith and Practice which were reported by the committee. David S. West, Reuben Peck, Rufus and Ovid Grennell were also appointed to represent them in the council to be held on the 10th instant.

The council convened November 10th, 1831, at the house of Dea. Rufus Grennell, in Canaan, composed of brethren from Abington, Bethany and Mt. Pleasant churches. Revs. Alexander Smith, Charles H. Hubbard and Charles A. Fox, were also present to participate in the services. After the council had listened to their Articles of Faith and Covenant, and considered "their difficulty in enjoying church privileges and the gifts among them, which ought to be brought into immediate exercise, they unanimously agreed that in order to promote their Christian enjoyment, and for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in the world, that they

be constituted into a separate and distinct church, by the name of the First Baptist Church of Christ in Canaan." There were twenty-four constituent members, ten males and fourteen females.

The church held its first covenant meeting on the 19th of this month, and on the 3d of December the first candidate for baptism was received, and baptized on the following day, by Rev. G. W. Leonard, of the Gibson and Jackson Church, who also administered the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. At a covenant meeting held on the 17th of this month, "Mr. Ovid Grennell was chosen clerk, and Brother Charles A. Fox was requested to continue his labors during the present Winter." Mr. Fox preached for them about three months and then returned to Hamilton, N. Y., to resume his studies.

On the 14th of April, 1832, Rev. Charles H. Hubbard, then preaching for the Bethany and Damascus churches, was invited to "preach and officiate in the duties of pastor, one-fourth of the time," until a permanent pastor could be obtained. Mr. Hubbard accepted the invitation and supplied them as his other engagements would permit. At this meeting a committee was appointed to correspond with ministering brethren in reference to a permanent settlement. In July of this year, the church agreed to raise one hundred and fifty dollars to secure the labors of Rev. Henry Curtis one-half of the time; the other half to be devoted to the Bethany Church. He accepted the invitation and entered upon his labors with this church in March, 1833; a relation he sustained at this time during some two years. At a covenant meeting, held September

20th, 1832, "a committee of three was appointed to select a number of tunes to be recommended to the church and congregation to be learned and used in public worship." It would be a gratification to know what success attended this novel experiment of congregational singing, with a limited number of tunes. A committee was also appointed to make arrangement for a place of public worship. Previous to this time, meetings had been held chiefly at the house of Dea. Grennell. This committee made arrangements with the proprietors for the control of the "North Canaan School house," for the purpose of worship; and also with the owner of the lot on which it stood. The church and congregation enlarged the house and occupied it as a place of public worship, except when it was used for school purposes, during some fourteen years. When the house was otherwise used, meetings were held in private dwellings. In November, 1833, a meeting of days was held, conducted by Revs. Henry Curtis and Alexander Smith; as the fruits of which the church was revived and some 12 or 15 were received by baptism.

In the Autumn of 1834, Mr. Geo. V. Walling, a licentiate from the State of New York, was invited to preach for the church. He accepted the invitation and labored for the church during some two years. In November, 1835, a council was convened for his ordination, Rev. Davis Dimock, of Montrose, officiating as moderator, and Rev. Alexander Smith acting as clerk. Revs. Dimock, Curtis and Smith Bixby remained and conducted a meeting of days "much to the encouragement of the church."

In June, 1837, Rev. Jos. Curren was called to the

pastorate of the church, a relation he sustained for some five years. In November, the pastor was assisted in conducting a meeting of several days and evenings, by Rev. D. P. Purdun, of New Jersey. The church was revived, backsliders were reclaimed and sinners converted to God. About twenty-five were baptized into the fellowship of the church by the pastor, during the following three months. Rev. James Spencer, from New Jersey, was called to the charge of the church in June, 1842. His labors extended through the year. In January, 1844, Rev. D. P. Purdun became pastor of the church, a relation he sustained for some ten months; during this period several were added by baptism. In the Fall of this year the church reported to the Association, 15 baptisms and 86 communicants.

In December, 1845, Rev. Henry Curtis was again called to the pastorate of the church, a relation he sustained during some twelve years, to general acceptance. In the opening of 1847, a meeting of several days was held, in which the pastor was assisted by Rev. William K. Mott. Ten were added to the church as the fruit of this meeting.

The first meeting-house was completed and opened for public worship in the Autumn of 1846. The dedication sermon was preached by Rev. William K. Mott. This house was destroyed by a hurricane on the 25th of July, 1851. A new house was erected on the same site, and dedicated on the 24th of January, 1855, Rev. Zelotes Grenell preaching the sermon on that occasion. The basement, however, had been occupied for some three years previous. From this date a series of meetings were held, in which the pastor was aided

for a short time, by Rev. E. L. Bailey, of Carbondale. Rev. Newell Callender also rendered such assistance as his other duties would permit. These meetings were continued with more or less frequency during some three months. In the Autumn of this year the church reported to the Association, 41 baptisms and 136 communicants. The following was published in the minutes of this year in the digest of letters: "The Clinton Church have completed and dedicated, in January last, a neat and commodious house of worship. An interesting revival followed. Brethren and sisters became aroused to a sense of their responsibilities, and humbled themselves before God. Unbelief and despondency yielded before the gracious manifestations of divine power. The refreshing descended like the gentle shower and continued to spread until it pervaded the entire community. The converts are from every class and condition—from eleven to seventy-eight years of age. Husbands with their wives, parents with their children, have yielded their hearts and consecrated their lives to the service of God."

Mr. Curtis continued to labor as a pastor of the church until the Spring of 1857, when, much to the regret of the brethren, he retired from the field in a state of physical debility, mental gloom and spiritual despondency. He preached his last sermon on the 15th of March, from 2 Cor. ii: 15, 16, dwelling on the following heads: The fearful contrast between the saved and the lost; The relation of the ministry to both classes; God will be glorified in the destiny of each, and his character fully vindicated. Soon after Mr. Curtis had retired, the church invited Rev. D. W.

Halsted to supply them. He accepted the invitation and is still faithfully laboring on this promising field.

It has been twenty-six years since this church was constituted. During that time they have enjoyed the labors of various pastors for a longer or shorter period, and have also been destitute for some four years, but not of preaching above, perhaps, a month at any one time. They have divided the labors of their pastors with the Herrick, Bethany, Damascus, Mt. Pleasant, Carbondale and Aldenville churches. In the absence of preaching they have maintained public services, either by listening to a printed sermon or by the exercise of the gifts of the members. A Sabbath School or Bible Class has been sustained during the Summer seasons. Covenant meetings have been regularly held once a month and communion occasions have been enjoyed every two months, except when destitute of an administrator, which has not been frequent.

The church has been favored with three general revivals and other seasons of refreshing more or less extensive. Most of their accessions have been the fruit of these revival seasons, and have usually proven as steadfast and reliable as those received in times of less general interest. These seasons of especial revival have, perhaps, been as various in their manifestations as in their general results and influence. At one time the heavenly refreshing would pour down like the driving and drenching shower, sudden in its coming and brief in its stay; at another it would distil like the silent and gentle dew, gradual in its approach and protracted in its duration, moistening and mellowing the soil and causing the seeds of truth to spring up and the plants of grace to bud and bloom.

The church has been favored with the services of five Deacons, four of whom are still living and continue their official relations, viz., Rufus Grennell, Austin Davenport, Hiram P. Loomis and E. K. Norton. William Bailey, the remaining one of the number, has been gathered to his rest and reward. The Trustees of the church are Messrs. Francis Griswold, Lemuel Stone, S. E. North, D. H. Peck and E. K. Norton. Mr. Virgil G. Gaylord is the present clerk. The church now embraces 123 communicants.

BENTON CHURCH.

In the Summer of 1832, a number of brethren and sisters, members of Abington Church, residing in Nicholson Township—now Benton, Luzerne county, requested letters of dismission for the purpose of organizing as an independent church. The request was acceded to by the Abington Church and letters of dismission were granted. A council of brethren from Abington, Clifford, Lenox and Greenfield churches, was called and convened in Nicholson, July 4th, 1832, to recognize said brethren and sisters as a Gospel church. The meeting was held in the barn of Mr. Hiram Green, “being thought more convenient,” as the record runs, “than the school house,” the usual place of holding meetings. The council organized by appointing, Rev. John Miller moderator, and Deacon Jeffery Dean clerk. Twenty four brethren and sisters, fourteen males, and ten females, presented letters of recommendation and requested to be recognized as the “Regular Baptist church of Nicholson.” Their Articles of Faith being approved, the council proceeded to recognize the above brethren and sisters by the following order of religious services, viz., Sermon by Rev. William House, from Isa. 42: 11. “Let the wilderness and cities thereof lift up their voice,” &c. Address and hand of fellowship by Rev. John Miller; concluding prayer by Rev. Charles Miller. The exercises seem to have been appropriate and profitable. The text employed on the occasion, is beautifully descriptive of the condition of this infant church in a comparative “wilderness,” and admirably adapted to inspire a hope of future prosper-

ity. No doubt the preacher developed and applied these leading thoughts to the condition and prospects of the church. The pioneer ministers in these wilds and woods, were eminently personal and practical in their preaching. The occasion often suggested a text and the circumstances furnished a theme. This practical mode of address was among the causes of their power and popularity.

Their first meeting for business was held in the "Franklin School House," July 21st, 1832, at which Messrs. Ezra Reynolds and Earl Manchester were appointed Deacons; Stephen Reynolds, chorister, and George Reynolds, assistant. The Saturday before the third Sunday in each month, was selected for covenant meetings, subsequently changed to the Saturday before the fourth Sunday; also Saturday before the second Sunday in August, for an annual meeting for business, afterwards held quarterly on Saturday preceding the second Sunday in November, February, May and August. Delegates were also appointed to represent the church at the Association to meet in Greenfield on the first Wednesday in September next, and instructed to request admission into that body. The request was presented and the church admitted into the Association. An interesting revival immediately followed, resulting in much good to the church and community. A large number, considering the sparseness of the population, were hopefully converted. On the 22d of October, following, fourteen were baptized and admitted into the church. Five more were added by baptism on the 11th of November. Occasional accessions continued to be received until the next session of the Association, when 46 are reported as their total membership.

The records present nothing further of especial interest until January 29th, 1834, when a meeting for business was held, and a committee of two appointed to raise "a sum by voluntary subscription" for the support of preaching among them, and also to confer with Rev. John Miller in regard to securing his services. At a meeting for business, held on the 10th of May following, the above committee reported, that Mr. Miller would attend with the church once a month for the coming year and be present at covenant meetings and Sabbath Schools, when convenient, and also meet occasionally with the church at other times, and that the sum raised should be appropriated to Missionary purposes. The report was adopted and the gratuitous services of Mr. Miller were secured.

The records present numerous and frequent cases of discipline, chiefly on account of irregular attendance on the meetings of the church. Some of the delinquents rendered satisfactory excuses for their absence, but others persisted and were finally excluded. A spirit of benevolence, however, seems to have prevailed to some extent among the members. At a meeting for business, February 7th, 1835, a committee was appointed to prepare a book with columns for various objects of Christian benevolence, and secure subscriptions. Among these objects the support of the Gospel among themselves, occupied a prominent place. August 10th, of that year, a vote was passed to pay Rev. Isaac Moore one hundred and thirty dollars for half of the time during the coming year, provided his services could be secured. On the 22d of the same month, Mr. Moore and wife were received as members of the church, and his ser-

vices secured as pastor, but enjoyed for only a short time. He and his wife took letters of dismission, June 26th, 1836. The church was now left destitute of stated preaching. Cases of discipline continued to be frequent and often painful. Among others, one of the constituent members was disciplined and finally excluded, not having attended with the church since its recognition. It is unnecessary, however, to dwell longer on this dark portion of their history.

In May, 1837, the services of Rev. Geo. W. Schofield, were engaged for half of the time during the coming year. In the Fall of that year, the work of the Lord was abundantly revived, a large number hopefully converted, and the church greatly encouraged. Between September, 1837, and May of the following year, some forty were baptized and received into the church. Thus within a few months, their numerical strength was nearly doubled. It would be pleasing to know who was the favored instrument in promoting this interesting revival, but when the records "hold their peace" their history must be silent. The name of Rev. James Clark appears in this connection and indicates, perhaps, by whom Jacob was enabled to arise. He is reported in the minutes of the Association for 1839 and '40, as pastor of the church.

At a meeting for business, August 29th, 1839, the name of the church was changed from Nicholson to *Benton*, and measures were taken to decide on a location and procure means to erect a house of worship, but the whole project was soon after abandoned. Nothing further of especial importance is recorded until April 24th, 1842, when Mr. Silas Finn and wife were re-

ceived into the church by letter, and his services engaged. He was ordained as pastor of the church, Feb. 9th, 1843, by a council of brethren from Abington, Benton, Clifford, Lenox, Scott and Greenfield churches; Rev. John Miller officiated as moderator, and Rev. Wm. K. Mott as clerk. The public services of ordination were conducted by Revs. Wm. K. Mott, John Baldwin, Henry Curtis, John Miller, Charles Miller and Rial Tower. "The exercises were solemn and impressive."

During the Fall of 1842 and Winter following, most of the members were measureably revived, and some sinners hopefully converted. The work commenced chiefly with one or two brethren residing at some distance from the usual place of holding meetings, in a neighborhood of Unitarians and Universalists. Here meetings for prayer, conference and preaching, were appointed; they were at first thinly attended, but continued to increase in interest and numbers until the house was filled with an attentive and often anxious audience. During the Winter the meetings were removed and held for some weeks at a more central point, and the pastor was encouraged by the presence and aided by the preaching of Mr. Mott. The church report to the Association in 1843, thirteen received by baptism and 92 as their total membership. The work, however, does not seem to have pervaded the entire church or reclaimed all the wandering. Numerous cases of discipline continue to be reported, often resulting in exclusion; yet at this time "a good degree of union existed" among the active members. Happy for pastor and people had this bond of Union and harmony

been strengthened and perpetuated! But such is not our privilege to believe or pleasure to record.

The meetings of the church were held at various places, subject to the wishes or whims of the members. A vote was passed, March 1st, 1845, to hold meetings during the coming year at the "Yellow School House," on the first three Sundays of each month, and at the "Franklin School House," on the fourth Sunday; covenant and other church meetings to be held at the latter place. This arrangement, however, did not prove permanent; subsequently other changes were made for reasons and to places unnecessary to mention.

August 1st, 1845, Mr. Orin Browning was appointed chorister in place of Stephen Reynolds, and the annual meeting for business changed to Thursday preceding the fourth Sunday in August. During the following Winter a number of the impenitent were brought to a knowledge of the truth and received into the church. Six were baptized January 4th, 1846, and others soon followed. The church reported to the Association of that year, nine added by baptism and 95 as their aggregate membership.

A committee of two was appointed February 14th, 1846, to ascertain the minds of the members, and decide on a location for a house of worship, but at a subsequent meeting, discharged without making a report. It was found difficult as it seems, if not impossible, to harmonize conflicting preferences of members residing in different localities. Thus a second time an important object was thwarted and the cause retarded, for want of individual concession and sacrifice for the general good. This was but the shadow of coming

events. Conflicting views on various subjects had long existed among the members, but had thus far been restrained and an open rupture delayed until January 1st, 1847. At a meeting for business held on that day, various subjects in dispute were presented and discussed; among these, were the office and duties of Deacons; the obligation of minorities to acquiesce in the decisions of majorities and various other kindred subjects. Opposite opinions, doubtless honestly entertained, were warmly advocated; two parties were formed, and the church was divided. Two letters were sent to the next Association but both were refused and a council was recommended.

On the 6th and 7th of September, 1847, the Baptists of Benton held a meeting in the "Yellow School House," for the purpose of becoming united and harmonious. Rev. Andrew Hopper officiated as chairman of the meeting. After a free and full interchange of views, a committee was appointed to draft resolutions as a basis of union. The report of the committee was adopted by the brethren and harmony restored.

At the same meeting, Mr. Wm. Travis was chosen Deacon of the church. On the 6th of October following, Dea. Earl Manchester died, leaving the church with but two Deacons. The vacancy occasioned by his death was filled January 31st, 1848, by appointing Mr. Hiram Green to the office of Deacon. On the 15th of April following, Mr. Green resigned his office and Mr. Joseph Chase was chosen to fill his place.

About this time an effort was made to raise a specified sum for the support of the ministry by voluntary subscription, but this mode not proving successful, re-

course was had to a system of equalization to raise the necessary amount. This mode also failing, the church vibrated for some time between the two modes of raising a salary, but finally settled for a time on the latter, and agreed March 24th, 1849, to continue the services of Rev. Silas Finn. If the mind and the means for usefulness were always commensurate, a system of equalization would prove satisfactory and successful.

In December following, Mr. Finn resigned his charge of the church. They were now left destitute of a pastor, but were supplied by Mr. Charles Parker, from April, 1850, until the following meeting of the Association. For some time subsequent, they were supplied by Mr. H. D. Walker, principal of the Madison Academy, at Abington Centre. In their letter to the Association in 1852, they say, "it is a source of grief to us that we are not all of the same mind, speaking and doing the same things. Eld. John Miller is our pastor and preaches one-fourth of the time at the 'Yellow School House,' and Mr. Silas Finn one-fourth of the time at Benton Centre."

February 3d, 1852, a meeting of the church was called to consider the propriety of building a house of worship; the meeting decided to build but one house and that it be located on a lot owned by Mr. H. Chambers, at Benton Centre. A committee was appointed on the 3d of November following, to solicit subscriptions and donations for building their house of worship. Their efforts were crowned with success. The house was erected at a cost of \$2316.39, and dedicated to the worship of God, March 2d, 1853, by appropriate religious services. The occasion was one of much interest and of great importance

to the future prosperity of the cause. April 1st, 1853, Rev. Silas Finn resumed his pastoral charge of the church. Under his faithful and efficient labors disaffected members were reconciled, and a good degree of prosperity was restored. But he did not deem it his duty to continue his labors on the field. Accordingly on the 12th of August, 1853, he resigned his pastoral charge of the church to take effect on the 1st of October following. The church reluctantly accepted his resignation. He had labored as their pastor "for near thirteen years with approved success."

He remained, however, within the bounds of the church and continued to supply their desk a portion of the time, until April, 1855, when an invitation was extended to Rev. Benj. Miller to become their pastor and preach for them at least one-half the time. The invitation was accepted and Mr. Miller entered on the duties of the pastoral office on the 14th of July following. Under his labors the church have thus far enjoyed a good degree of peace and prosperity. They speak in their letter to the Association in 1855, of trials from external errors and isms, but enjoy internal union and harmony. Covenant meetings are usually well attended and a desire is expressed for the prosperity of the cause. A number of old hoppers have been awakened and added to their membership. They are not forgetful of the cause of Christ at home and abroad; these objects share in their sympathies and contributions. They say in their letter to the Association in 1856, that they enjoy the labors of Mr. Benj. Miller one-fourth of the time but are anxious to be able to sustain the weekly ministrations of the word. In 1857 they

report eleven received by baptism and 97 as their total membership, and also say in their letter to the Association, that during a portion of the past Spring, meetings were held by their pastor, aided by Mr. D. W. Halsted, which resulted in the hopeful conversion of many precious souls, and were the means of reclaiming some who had sadly wandered.

HERRICK CHURCH.

This church was recognized in Herrick, Susquehanna county, Pennsylvania, June 11th, 1834, with ten constituent members, seven males and three females. The council of recognition was composed of brethren from Abington, Benton, Bridgewater, Clifford, Jackson and Gibson, Scott and Greenfield churches. Rev. John Miller officiated as moderator, and Deacon Earl Manchester as clerk. Their Articles of Faith having been presented and approved, the following brethren and sisters were recognized as the "Regular Baptist Church of Herrick," viz., Jacob Lyons, Thomas Burns, Martin Bunnell, Benjamin Coon, Silas Finn, Benjamin Watrous, Alexander Burns, Mahala Lyons, Harriet Coon and Emily B. Finn. The sermon of recognition was preached by the moderator, from Matt. 16: 18, and hand of fellowship extended to the church by the same; the concluding prayer was offered by Rev. Charles Miller, of Clifford.

On the 5th of July following, Jacob Lyons was chosen Deacon of the church, and Benj. Watrous clerk. At a subsequent meeting, Messrs. Finn and Lyons were appointed to represent the church in the Association, to meet at Abington on the first Wednesday of September, 1834, and request admission into that body. The request was acceded to and the church admitted into the Association.

The early history of this church was marked by few changes worthy of particular notice. The labors of a settled pastor were not enjoyed, yet covenant and other meetings were statedly held, and the business of the

church was conducted in an orderly manner. Delinquents were promptly looked after and difficulties amicably settled. Occasional accessions are reported and other changes recorded. The church report to the Association in 1836, five received by baptism, and a total membership of eighteen.

In the minutes of the Association for 1839 and '41, Rev. Joseph Currin is returned as pastor of the church. His labors were divided between this and the Clinton Church.

At a meeting for business, September 26th, 1840, Mr. Silas Finn related his exercises before the church with reference to the work of the ministry, and received "liberty," as the record runs, "to improve his gift." He was subsequently licensed to preach the Gospel, and in the Spring of 1842, he and his wife were dismissed to unite with the Benton Church.

In the minutes of the Association for 1842 and '43, Rev. John Baldwin is reported as pastor of the church. His labors were enjoyed one-fourth of the time, during most of two years, and measurably blessed in the advancement of the cause and conversion of the impenitent. On the 14th of July, 1842, six were baptized and received into the church. In the Winter following, the church held a protracted meeting, conducted chiefly by Mr. George A. Hogeboom, which resulted in much good. "The church," as their letter to the Association reads, "seemed to be quickened and some professed faith in Christ." They report to the Association in 1843, two received by baptism and an aggregate membership of thirty-one. This was the culminating point in their numerical prosperity. From this time their number

gradually diminished until the church finally disbanded.

At the annual session of the Association in 1849, a committee of two was appointed to visit this and the Second Clifford Church, to ascertain their condition, render assistance, and report to the next meeting of the Association. The committee made a report as contemplated in their appointment, which was adopted, but not recorded in the minutes. No favorable change, however, was effected in the condition of these churches; their disease had become chronic, and soon ripened into dissolution.

The records of the Herrick Church present a blank from October 21st, 1848, to July 13th, 1851. At the latter date, a meeting for business was held and the church gently breathed out its feeble life in the following language: "The few remaining brethren of the Regular Baptist Church in Herrick, met and on due consideration agreed to disband."

Here we conclude this imperfect sketch of the growth and decay of the Herrick Church, and erect it as a monument over its untimely grave.

PAUPACK EDDY CHURCH.

In the year 1832, Mr. James Purdy, son of Rev. William Purdy, moved with his family from "Purdytown," and settled in the vicinity of Paupack Eddy, Wayne county, Pennsylvania. He and his wife were the only Baptists living at the time in the immediate neighborhood. They established and sustained a prayer meeting in connection with members of other denominations. In January, 1833, Rev. Henry Curtis, pastor of Bethany Church, visited the settlement and held a "three days' meeting." His faithful labors were blessed and a "precious work of grace followed." A number were hopefully converted, and during the year seventeen persons living in the vicinity of Paupack Eddy, were admitted as members of Bethany Church, four by letter and thirteen by baptism; one more was baptized the following year. Mr. Curtis continued to visit the place occasionally to preach the Gospel and administer the ordinances.

On the 29th of November, 1834, the Paupack Eddy Church was recognized with eighteen members, seven males and eleven females, by a council of ministers and members, convened for that purpose, from Bethany, Canaan, Damascus and Palmyra churches. Thirteen of the constituent members were from the Bethany Church. During the year following its organization, the church was supplied with preaching by Mr. John Capron, one of the constituent members, having previously been "approved by the Bethany Church in holding meetings." At the close of his labors he took a letter of dismission and emigrated to the West. On

the 9th of July, 1835, delegates were appointed to the Association and instructed to request admission into that body. The request was granted and the church admitted into the Association at its annual meeting, held at Damascus in September following.

Rev. Henry Curtis continued to visit the church occasionally when destitute of stated preaching, and administer the ordinances. His labors were highly prized by the members and of essential service to the cause. Under his preaching a revival commenced in the Autumn of 1837, and continued during the Winter following. The members were moved to labor and pray and sinners to repent and believe. The church report to the Association in 1838, eleven received by baptism and twenty-four as their total membership.

About this time the services of Mr. George V. Walling, a licentiate of Clinton Church, were engaged one-half of the time for one year. He preached for the church with general acceptance until he was compelled, on account of impaired health, to resign his charge and retire from the field. The Church was destitute of stated preaching until the Autumn of 1840, when the ministerial labors of Rev. D. F. Leach, pastor of the church at Ten Mile River, were engaged one-half of the time. He continued to preach for the church with occasional intervals during the four subsequent years. Under his faithful labors the church was strengthened and the membership enlarged. A series of meetings were held soon after his settlement, resulting in great good to the cause. Sinners were converted and saints encouraged. As the fruits of this meeting, ten were baptized and added to the church, increasing its num-

ber to thirty-three. Again in the Winter of 1842 and '43, a meeting of days was held and a large number of the impenitent professed faith in Christ, whose second coming was believed by many to be at hand. This belief seems to have pervaded and excited the public mind, and doubtless exerted its influence on the meetings, and also on the motives of those who made a profession of religion. The church report to the Association in the Fall of 1843, thirty received by baptism and fifty-six as their total membership. The present prosperity of the church, however, was of but short continuance. Adversity soon followed. The church was distracted and disheartened by internal dissensions and difficulties. Most of the male members who had made a profession of religion in prospect of the speedy coming of Christ, when the time appointed had passed and their anticipations were disappointed, turned back to the world and followed no more with the Saviour. In 1844, Mr. Leach resigned the pastoral care of the church and in the following Spring, removed to Port Jervis, N. Y., to take charge of the church in that place.

Having thus far neglected to appoint Deacons, the church now realized the necessity of such officers to aid the pastor and watch over the general interests of the cause. Accordingly in April, 1845, Messrs. Lemuel Daniels, Elias Murrey and John Milham were chosen as Deacons of the church. The last named still serves the cause in that capacity. This year the church completed and dedicated their house of worship. It was convenient and pleasantly situated on the north bank of the Lackawaxen near its confluence with the Wallen-

paupack creek. The location at present is not the best adapted to accommodate the population.

After being destitute of regular preaching for some months, the services of Mr. Harvey H. Gray, a licentiate from Bridgewater Association, were secured and enjoyed for six months. He then resigned his charge and returned to his home in Susquehanna county, on account of the state of his health. Rev. M. M. Everet was the next pastor. He commenced preaching for the church in 1847, and continued his services one-half of the time for one year. His labors were highly appreciated by the members, and measurably blessed. During his term of service he baptized three persons into the fellowship of the church. Rev. J. P. Stalbird having settled in the vicinity of the church, accepted an invitation to become pastor. After laboring upwards of a year in this relation, he also resigned his charge and moved to Berlin to take the oversight of the church in that place. Rev. L. L. Still accepted the pastoral charge of the church in April, 1852. He remained through the year and then resigned, the church not feeling able to give him a living support. In May, 1853, Rev. Sanford Leach accepted the charge of the church. His labors were divided between this and three other churches in the vicinity, assisted by Rev. J. B. Case, who was a member of the church and resident of the place. Under the labors of the two the church became distracted and disheartened. Mr. Leach, however, retired from the conflict near the close of the year. Mr. Case now became the sole pastor, and an effort was made to restore discipline. They report to the Association in 1854, two received by baptism and forty-six as

their total membership. Two letters and two sets of delegates were sent to the next annual meeting of the Association; both were rejected and the brethren of the church were recommended to make an earnest and prayerful effort to restore union and harmony. Mr. Case soon after resigned and removed from the place. The church say in their letter to the Association in 1856, that the past two years have been fraught with sorrow and darkness. They are scattered but not entirely forsaken or discouraged. Covenant meetings are statedly held and but sparcely attended, nearly one-half of their membership having withdrawn from the church without letters of dismissal. They report thirty as their total membership. This church is evidently on the road to ruin unless better counsels prevail and confidence is restored. They made no report to the Association in 1857. It is feared that the church will soon become extinct.

TEN MILE RIVER CHURCH.

In the Spring of 1840, Messrs. E. Tyler, A. F. Bush and Thompson Parsons, commenced holding prayer meetings at Ten Mile River, in Sullivan county, N. Y. The meetings were continued, increasing in interest and attendance. The brethren were encouraged and the unconverted were not entirely indifferent. It was now thought advisable to secure some suitable person to preach and aid in conducting the meetings. Accordingly an invitation was given to Rev. Henry Curtis, pastor of Damascus Church, to come to their assistance. He responded to the call and commenced a series of meetings, aided by Mr. Daniel F. Leach, a student from Hamilton Literary Institution. The Word preached was attended with convincing and converting power, leading Christians to pray and labor, and sinners to cry "men and brethren what shall we do to be saved?" Soon a number of the anxious were indulging hope in an all-sufficient Saviour. The meetings were continued with increasing interest and power. The subject of believers baptism and church membership now began to claim attention and elicit discussion. As usual, candid inquiry resulted in a sense of obligation to make a public profession of Christ by baptism, and become identified with his people. A number of persons manifested a desire to unite with a Baptist church. This desire being made known to the Damascus Church, situated some fourteen miles above, on the Delaware River, a special meeting was appointed by that church and held at Ten Mile River, to hear experiences and receive candidates for baptism and

membership. A number of the converts presenting themselves at this meeting, were cordially received and baptized on a profession of faith, by Mr. Curtis, and became a branch of Damascus Church. Others united with this branch from time to time, until it embraced 29 communicants.

Occupying a field so extensive and so far from the parent church, it was decided to request letters of dismission, and organized as an independent body. Accordingly letters of dismission were secured, and a council of recognition convened August 18th, 1840, at Ten Mile River. Twenty-nine persons presented themselves to the council, 16 males and 13 females, and received fellowship as an independent church. The services were of a highly interesting character and left a favorable impression.

When the church united with the Association at its session in September following, Mr. D. F. Leach is reported as supply. He was ordained pastor of the church, on the 30th of the same month, and continued to sustain that relation until May of 1845, dividing his services between this and the Paupack Eddy Church. Under his labors the cause was measurably prospered. In October of 1840, Messrs. William Hawks and Tobias Fox were chosen Deacons of the church, and ordained to that office in the following year. The church report to the Association in 1841, nine received by baptism and 43 as their total membership, increased the following year to 46. In 1843, they report 44 as their total membership, and say in their letter to the Association, that the past year has been one of adversity. Several of the members had, within a few months,

scattered into different neighborhoods, and were living from seven to ten miles from the usual place of holding worship; others had been detained from the meetings by prevailing sickness in their families and among their neighbors. The grave had also closed over a number accustomed to meet with them, among whom was a beloved sister, the companion of Dea. Hawks, whose faithfulness and fervor had greatly endeared her to the members of the church. In 1844, they report one received by baptism and 43 as their total membership.

In the Spring of 1845, the services of Mr. James P. Stalbird, a licentiate of Blakely Church, were secured. He was subsequently ordained pastor of the church, and sustained that relation during some three years. The cause seems to have made some progress under his labors. In 1846, the church report 40 as their total membership, and say in their letter to the Association, that they still enjoy the labors of Mr. Stalbird a part of the time. Congregations had been comparatively large and covenant meetings quite interesting. Three weekly prayer meetings had been sustained by a few as in former years. The Sabbath School, however, had been somewhat neglected. In 1847, the church was measurably revived and the cause strengthened. They report to the Association of that year, 11 received by baptism and 51 as their total membership.

In 1848, Rev. M. M. Everet accepted the pastoral charge, dividing his labors between this and the church at Paupack Eddy. He continued to serve the cause in this relation until 1852, when he resigned and retired from the Association. Under his faithful labors, the church enjoyed a degree of prosperity and received

some accessions by baptism. Two were baptized in 1848, the same number in the following year, and one in 1850. In 1852, the church report four received by baptism and 64 as their total membership—the culminating point in their numerical prosperity—and say in their letter to the Association, which met with them that year, that they are grateful for the mercies of the past year; had tokens of a deep and solemn work of grace, but the enemy of all righteousness, by weakening the faith of the brethren, disappointed their hopes. A few, however, were hopefully converted.

Rev. J. R. Ross was the next pastor of the church. He commenced supplying them while teaching an Academy at Narrowsburgh, and finally in the Autumn of 1852, accepted an invitation to assume the pastoral charge of the church. He resigned in May of 1854, and removed from the Association. His labors were faithful, but without any marked results.

In 1854, Mr. Stalbird again accepted the charge of the church, and has continued to sustain that relation until the present. Little has occurred during his ministry worthy of particular notice. The church report in 1856, two received by baptism, and 53 as their total membership, but complain of their scattered condition and want of activity and earnestness in the cause of the Master. In 1857, they report 50 communicants, and say that they cannot tell of prosperity and progress in the service of Christ. They, however, still cling to the Word and promise of God, and hope for brighter and better days.

SECOND CLIFFORD CHURCH.

The records of this church have been either carelessly lost or culpably destroyed; hence, it will be impossible to present a complete notice of its brief but erratic course. A few disconnected facts, however, have been gathered from various reliable sources.

Ten persons, six males and four females, residing on the western slope of "Elk Hill," in Clifford, Susquehanna county, Pennsylvania, were recognized, December 8th, 1841, as the Second Baptist Church of Clifford, by a council of delegates from various neighboring churches, convened for that purpose. Mr. Wm. Tripp was chosen Deacon of the church soon after its organization, but he did not long survive to serve the cause in that capacity. He died September 7th, 1842, on the second day of the session of the Association, at which the church was admitted into that body. They report in the Autumn of that year four received by letter and fourteen as their total membership.

The meetings of the church were usually held in the "Brundage School House," on the "Collar road." Rev. Charles Miller, who had formerly occupied this place as an out-station, continued to preach for this church occasionally for some two years after its organization. Mr. George A. Hogeboom was licensed by this church and preached for them about one-half of the time during some seven years. They say in their letter to the Association in the Fall of 1843, that they have been preserved in unity of spirit and permitted to enjoy many precious privileges. Under the occasional preaching of Mr. Hogeboom, their congregations are

attentive and comparatively large, notwithstanding a considerable portion of the community are emigrants from Wales and prefer to hold separate meetings, conducting their public services in a foreign language.

The church report to the Association in the Autumn of 1844, 14, and in 1846, 16 communicants, and say in their letter of the latter year, that they have passed through some trials and mourn over their own barrenness and the indifference of the young to their eternal interests. They are without a settled pastor but have been favored with occasional preaching by Rev. Charles Miller, George A. Hogeboom and Wm. A. Miller, during a portion of the past year. In 1847, the church was supplied by Rev. Wm. McKowan during some six months. They report to the Association in the Autumn of that year, one received by baptism and 17 as their total membership. In the Fall of 1848, the church sent a request to the Association to be dropped from the minutes, without assigning any reason. They also say in their letter that they have been favored during the past year with the labors of Mr. Hogeboom whom they believe God has raised up in their midst that sinners may be warned and saints comforted. The request, however, of the church to be "dropped" was not granted by the Association, it being considered unconstitutional. At the session of the Association in 1849, Revs. John Miller and Henry Curtis were appointed to visit this and the Herrick Church, learn their condition, and report to the next Anniversary. One or both of this committee visited these churches as contemplated but without effecting any favorable change in their position and prospects. They had gone beyond the reach

of remedies or hope of recussitation. The Second Clifford Church made no further report to the Association, and continued to decline until December 1st, 1850, when it formally dissolved and the remaining members dispersed. Such was the erring course of this feeble church, foreshadowing its untimely dissolution. Its obscure grave is situated near that of its elder sister, Herrick Church, being separated only by the "Elk Hill," whose lofty summit casts its morning shadow on the one, and extends its evening shades over the other—a fitting gloom for faithless graves.

HONESDALE CHURCH.

As early as 1833, Rev. Henry Curtis, pastor of Bethany Church, commenced preaching occasionally at the district school house in the village of Honesdale. He continued to occupy this place as an out-station until a sufficient number of members were gathered to form an independent church, usually preaching at five o'clock on the afternoon of every other Sabbath. During this period Mr. Curtis baptized Mr. Franklin Davoll, living in the village, and several more residing in the vicinity.

In February, 1842, the church at Bethany commenced holding a series of meetings, in which the pastor was assisted by Rev. Lewis Raymond, and continued them from evening to evening for some weeks. During the progress of these meetings a large number of persons were hopefully converted, and upwards of 40 were buried with Christ in baptism. At the close of this meeting in Bethany, Mr. Raymond commenced a series of meetings with the brethren at Honesdale. These meetings were held in the *"Tabernacle" and continued day after day for some four weeks. During this time more than 20 professed faith in Christ, seven of whom were added by baptism to the Bethany Church. A number of Baptist members having settled in the village and vicinity, it was now decided to

* This Tabernacle, the first building erected at Honesdale, was situated on a point of land formed by the confluence of the Dyberry and Lackawaxen creeks. It was built in 1826 and used for a time as a work shop, but was subsequently enlarged and occupied successively by the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist societies, as a place of worship, until they could erect "Temples" more costly and convenient.

organize a church in the place. Accordingly a council of brethren from Bethany, Clinton, Damascus, Mt. Pleasant and Ten Mile River churches, was convened in Honesdale, May 10th, 1842, at the request of the first named church, for the purpose of recognizing the brethren and sisters residing in that place and vicinity as an independent church. Twenty-nine persons, 14 males and 15 females, presented themselves to the council, 26 having letters from Bethany, two from Damascus and one from Mt. Pleasant, and received fellowship as the Honesdale Baptist Church. The public services of recognition were conducted by Revs. Henry Curtis, D. F. Leach, Lewis Raymond and A. B. Hubbard. The occasion was one of peculiar interest and solemnity.

Although the revival had subsided, yet some of its fruits remained to be gathered and garnered. On the 14th inst., two members were added to this infant church by letter, and 13 persons received as candidates for baptism. These went forward in that ordinance on the following day. In the next June, five more were received by letter and three by baptism. When the church united with the Association in the following Autumn, it embraced 54 communicants. Thus far the church had been supplied chiefly by Rev. D. F. Leach, and occasionally by Revs. L. Raymond, H. Curtis and A. B. Hubbard. In August, however, the services of Mr. Daniel L. McGear, were secured. He was received as a member of the church, February 9th, 1843, and ordained as pastor on the 9th of March following, a position he held until the following June, when he resigned his charge and retired from the field. He

has since made shipwreck of morals and the ministry. About this time the church received a valuable accession of 10 members from the Clinton Church, among whom were Messrs. Virgil Grennell and E. K. Norton, whose pecuniary aid and personal efforts were of essential service to the cause.

In October of this year, Rev. D. D. Gray was settled as pastor of the church. He found the church in an unsettled state, from the inexperience of some, and floating character of the village portion of its members. His efforts and influence were of immediate service to the distracted cause. In March, 1844, a series of meetings were held and greatly blessed in healing divisions, and restoring backsliders. A number of persons were also hopefully converted and received into fellowship. The church reported to the Association in the following Autumn, 13 baptisms and 102 communicants.

The "Tabernacle," thus far used as a place of worship, being unsightly and inconvenient, the church resolved in the Spring of this year, to "rise and build" a suitable house of worship on a pleasant site previously purchased. On the 19th of June following, the frame was raised. From this time until the house was opened for worship, a period of some 12 months, the attention of pastor and people, was almost wholly absorbed in this new enterprise. The limited means of the members, were taxed to the highest point of patient endurance, and money was constantly demanded to meet necessary expenses; hence, the business meetings of the church, related almost entirely to pecuniary matters. Their house of worship was finally so far finished and furnished, as to be convenient for public worship.

It was dedicated on the 30th of July, 1845, by appropriate religious services. Sermons were preached on the occasion by Rev. John Dowling and Rev. Albert L. Post. The house is 38 by 54 feet on the ground, besides the porch in front, with a spire and galleries, bell and basement, the whole, when completed, together with the lot, costing \$3775. Of this amount, little was obtained from abroad. When the house was dedicated and all the available subscriptions collected, a debt remained unprovided for, of about \$1200. The house was immediately insured, and the slips were rented. This was an important epoch in the history of the church. In April, 1846, Mr. Gray resigned his charge and removed to his early home in Braintrim. He had been pastor of the church about two years and a half. During that time he had baptized some 12 converts and labored assiduously in preaching the Gospel, warning the impenitent, maintaining discipline and building a commodious house of worship. The members, with few exceptions, were strongly attached to him and exceedingly anxiously to retain his valuable services.

Rev. G. S. Bailey, a young man of much promise, supplied the church about three months, but for some reason, declined to settle as pastor. Rev. Alexander Smith also supplied the church for some two months, in the following Autumn, but on account of the situation of his family, refused to accept the pastoral charge. In September of this year, an effort was made to pay up arrearages and reduce the remaining debt on the meeting house. This effort was measurably successful.

In March, 1847, Rev. T. O. Judd became pastor of the church, and continued to serve the cause in that re-

lation, for three years. He was highly esteemed for his piety and preaching, his sermons being ably written and delivered. He, however, seldom attended prayer meetings or visited among the members, thus greatly limiting the sphere of his influence, and gradually diminishing the number of his congregation. Under his labors the church enjoyed a usual degree of internal peace, but remained nearly stationary as to numbers. In the Autumn of 1849, it embraced 101 communicants. In February, 1850, the church appointed a committee to correspond with distant members, and drop from its record the names of such as could not be heard from and had been absent more than a year. In August of this year, Rev. C. C. Williams was settled as pastor of the church, a position he held some two years and eight months. Under his faithful labors, congregations gradually increased in size and seriousness. One person was baptized in October and another in December. In February, 1851, a committee was appointed to visit absentees and urge them to regularly attend the meetings of worship. In March, a series of meetings were held, mostly for prayer and exhortation. These meetings were well attended and resulted in great good to the cause. The church reported to the Association in the Autumn of this year, 12 baptisms and 119 communicants. In December, 1852, another series of meetings were held, in which the pastor was assisted by Rev. William S. Hall, resulting in the hopeful conversion of a number of persons, seven of whom were baptized and received into the fellowship of the church. In April, 1853, Mr. Williams resigned his charge and retired from the Association. During July and August

of this year, Mr. William B. Smith, from Madison University, supplied the church, to general acceptance.

In October following, Rev. Zelotes Grenell became pastor of the church. Under his efficient labors the cause was measurably prospered and congregations were considerably increased. The church report to the Association, in the Autumn of 1854, six received by baptism, 12 by letter and 91 as their total membership, and also say in their letter, that they are situated in the midst of strong opposing interests and influences, backed by talent, wealth and show; consequently congregations are comparatively small, but are steadily increasing. They have reduced their pecuniary liabilities to less than one-third of what they were two years since. Their Sabbath School has greatly increased in the number of scholars and volumes in the library. In May, 1855, Mr. Grenell unexpectedly resigned his charge of the church and retired from the field, greatly to the regret of the church and congregation. The hope had been indulged that he was permanently settled and would close his protracted ministry with this church.

For about eight months the church was without a pastor and sometimes without preaching. Under these circumstances, the congregation became broken up and greatly reduced in numbers. The prayer meeting was almost entirely deserted, except by a few faithful ones who persevered in meeting together to weep over Zion and pray for her prosperity. In January, 1856, Rev. J. N. Folwell settled as pastor of the church, a position he still occupies. He entered on his labors amid many discouragements, but soon witnessed indications of re-

turning prosperity, in an increasing attendance at the meetings and attention to the Word preached. The members were revived and some souls were hopefully converted. The church reported to the Association in the Autumn of this year, 16 baptisms and 92 communicants. The following year was marked and saddened by the death of Dea. L. L. Demming who had "purchased to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith." He was a devoted Christian, a faithful Deacon and liberal supporter of various objects of religious benevolence. He died greatly loved and lamented by the church and community. He was, however, missed and mourned, perhaps, by none more than by his fellow-laborers, Deas. Franklin Davoll and Eliphalet Wood, who, by their intimate relations with him as standard-bearers in the church of Christ, had learned to appreciate his wisdom and prize his worth. The church report to the Association in the Autumn of this year, six baptisms and 90 communicants, and also say in their letter, that they have paid their last debt of \$700 on the meeting house, and also purchased a parsonage property pleasantly situated, for \$2000, on which they have paid \$500. They have enjoyed much love and peace among themselves. They feel the need of a refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and are crying importunately to him to rain righteousness upon them and cause them to become a strong people.

BLAKELY CHURCH.

At any early period a Baptist minister occasionally penetrated the Lackawanna Valley as far up as Blakely, preaching to small congregations and baptizing a few converts. It is presumed that Rev. Wm. Bishop filled occasional appointments in this portion of the valley. It is known that Rev. John Miller frequently preached at Providence, and occasionally in Blakely. "His visits," says one living on the field, "were refreshing to the children of God." In 1819, Mr. Samuel Callender Jr., a member of Greenfield Church, settled in Blakely, and with other members residing in the place, commenced holding prayer and covenant meetings as a branch of that church. These were often seasons of peculiar interest and profit. This branch also enjoyed frequent supplies. On the 13th of May, 1820, the church "voted that brother John Finn preach in Blakely on the first and third Lord's day of each month." This arrangement was complied with and continued with some variations for a number of years. On the 25th of September, 1824, Mr. Callender was appointed Deacon of the church with special reference to the interests of the Blakely branch. In the Winter of 1828-9, Mr. Benj. Miller, a young convert from Abington, was engaged as a school teacher in Blakely. "He felt and manifested a deep interest in the prosperity of Zion and salvation of souls. His efforts in connection with the resident members were blessed in the hopeful conversion of a number of precious souls." In April, 1829, Rev. John Miller preached in Blakely and baptized six converts. In December following, Rev James Clark also

preached in that place and baptized three persons, and in February, 1830, he again preached in the place and baptized three more converts.

A few months previously, Rev. Wm. House settled as pastor of Greenfield Church, preaching for the Blakely branch once in two weeks. For a time his labors were greatly prospered, and frequent additions were made to this branch. An ample house of worship was built about the year 1832, chiefly through the efforts and enterprise of Dea. Callender. In the Autumn of this year the Association met in this unfinished house, and took a collection to aid in its completion. The light of prosperity, however, soon began to grow dim; the night of adversity gathered over the cause, and most of the members of this branch, were composed to rest on the easy bed of Anti-nomianism. The pastor having imbibed and inculcated anti-effort principles, secured some forty-five adherents, many of whom were connected with this branch, and with these separated from the church in the Spring of 1834, to form an "Old School" Baptist church a few miles below Blakely, in the Lackawanna Valley. Amid this general defection, a few, however, connected with this branch, remained firm to their former principles, and continued to labor and pray for the prosperity and progress of the waning cause. Their efforts were not in vain; their prayers were not unanswered. About this time Rev. J. B. Chase supplied them for a "few months with good results." In the Autumn of this year Rev. Wm. K. Mott, who was laboring in the valley, preached occasionally for a time at Blakely. Under his efficient labors the languishing cause soon began to revive and some souls were finally

led to seek Christ and identify themselves with his cause. In the Spring and Summer of 1835, Rev. Isaac Moore supplied the Greenfield Church, preaching occasionally for the Blakely branch. For a few subsequent years, it is presumed that Rev. Levi Baldwin pastor of the church, preached occasionally for this branch. The great revival of 1839, in Greenfield, under the labors of Mr. Mott, spread over an extensive territory, reaching in its progress the upper portion of the Lackawanna Valley. In June of that year, Mr. Mott preached at Baconville and baptized seven converts, among whom were Messrs. J. B. Kenyon and Newell Callender, since ordained to the work of the ministry. In July following, six more were baptized in Blakely. Others were also baptized in the vicinity from time to time and added to this branch, until it embraced a sufficient number of members to organize as an independent church.

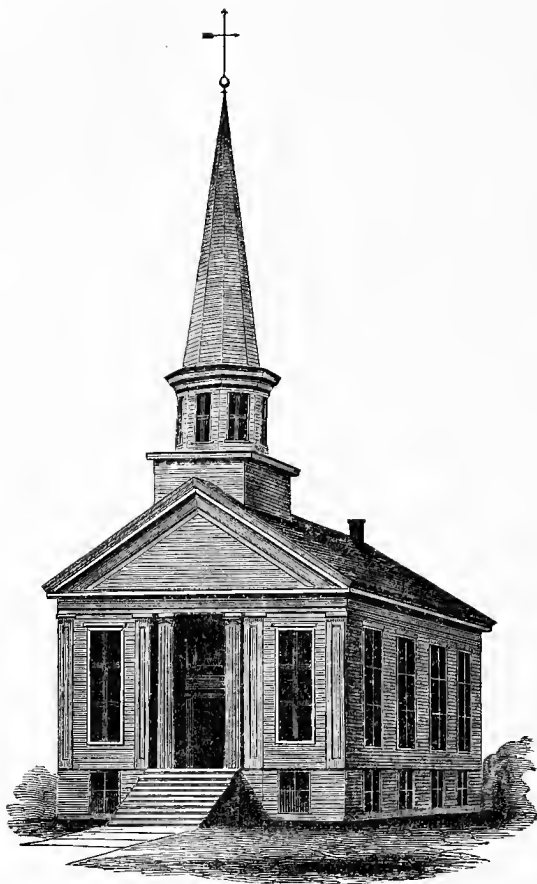
A council of brethren from Abington, Benton, Bethany, Carbondale, Greenfield and Pittston churches, was convened at the meeting house in Blakely, Luzerne county, Pennsylvania, on the 27th of April, 1843, for the purpose of recognizing the members of this branch as a gospel church. Rev. Henry Curtis was chosen moderator and Mr. Henry Hayden clerk of the council. Twenty-seven persons, nine males and eighteen females, then presented themselves with their Articles of Faith and letters of dismission from the Greenfield church and received fellowship as the Regular Baptist Church of Blakely. The public services of recognition, were conducted by Revs. Henry Curtis, Wm. K. Mott, Silas Finn and Daniel E. Bowen.

When the church united with the Association in the following Autumn, they say in their letter that, "during the last Fall and Winter God was graciously pleased to bless his work in the awakening and conversion of a number of precious souls, increasing our numerical and spiritual strength to such a degree as to call upon us to organize as an independent body. Rev. Wm. K. Mott continues to labor among us one-quarter of the time, with much acceptance." Mr. James P. Stalbird, a licentiate of the Greenfield Church, having united by letter with the Blakely Church, was reported as a supply for this and the following year. Rev. Wm. K. Mott continued to preach for this church a portion of the time until the close of 1849. During that period he baptized twelve persons into the fellowship of this church. In October of this year, Mr. Benj. Bowen was chosen Deacon of the church, a position he still sustains.

In 1850, Rev. James Thompson officiated as pastor, dividing his labors between this and the Covington Church. In the following year Mr. Charles Parker, a licentiate of Abington Church, supplied this church one-half of the time for some nine months with general acceptance. The church report to the Association in the Autumn of this year, 37 communicants, and say in their letter that they have met with no material changes during the past year, save in the removal by death of Dea. Samuel Callender, who has long been one of the pillars in the church. Their heavy loss they believe to be his eternal gain. Their numbers being few and scattered, they seldom meet as a whole in the capacity of public worship.

In the Spring of 1852, a revival commenced in the Lackawanna Valley, under the labors of Mr. E. A. Francis, who had spent the preceding Winter as a school teacher near the "Capouse Works." Rev. William K. Mott came to his aid and labored with great efficiency. The following communication, dated May 13th, was published in the *American Baptist*: "A precious revival is in progress in the Lackawanna Valley. It commenced a few miles above Hyde Park and is on its way towards the head of the valley. The revival cannot be said to be in any church or congregation; the meetings are held chiefly in school houses and private dwellings, members of various denominations taking part in the exercises. The Baptists, however, have taken the lead and received most if not all the accessions. Mr. Mott, pastor of the Baptist church at Hyde Park, has done most of the preaching, and within a few weeks past, baptized some thirty of the converts, most of whom have united with the Blakely Church; others, though baptized, have not yet become members of any church." The work continued for some weeks, reaching in its progress almost every class and condition. The church reported to the Association in the following Autumn, 59 baptisms and 98 communicants. On the 6th of August of this year, Mr. Newell Callender was licensed to preach the Gospel. In the following October, Rev. J. M. Lyons commenced laboring for the church as a supply and continued to serve the cause in that capacity for some six months. In June of 1853, Rev. O. L. Hall was settled as pastor of the church, a relation he sustained during some nine months. The church reported to

the Association in the following Autumn, six baptisms and 104 communicants. Mr. J. B. Kenyon, previously appointed Deacon of the church, was licensed to preach the Gospel, August 13th of this year, and continued to supply the church until March 15th, 1855, when he was ordained as pastor. He still sustains that relation, giving a portion of his time to the interests of the cause, and receiving very little remuneration for his services. The church reported to the Association in the Fall of 1857, eight baptisms and 79 communicants. Since its organization 87 have been baptized into its fellowship.



BEREAN BAPTIST CHURCH,

CARBONDALE CITY, PA.

BEREAN CHURCH OF CARBONDALE.

Some of the earlier settlers of Carbondale entertained Baptist sentiments. In the Summer of 1830, a company of 20 Welsh emigrants, attracted chiefly by the mining interests, settled in the place, among whom were four Regular Baptists. Mr. John Bowen was a Deacon, his brother James was a minister, and their wives were members—embracing the elements of a Gospel church. Their faith was not abandoned or zeal abated by leaving home and crossing the ocean, but far from friends and fatherland, among strangers speaking another language, they clung the more closely to their cherished creed and distinctive principles. Ways were soon devised and means employed to promote their spiritual interests and propagate their cherished sentiments. Meetings for prayer and preaching, were commenced at the house of Deacon Bowen, on the west side of Main Street, on the site now occupied by the store of Mr. Patrick Moffit, Jr. For a time, their congregations were comparatively small, consisting of only a few Welsh families. It was not long, however, before some of their American neighbors of various denominations, met with them occasionally, attracted chiefly by the “songs of Zion, in a strange” tongue. This curiosity was frequently improved by repeating the substance of the services and sermon in English, for the profit and pleasure of that portion of the audience unable to understand the Welsh language. Their numbers were also augmented from time to time by fresh emigrants from Wales, of whom a fair proportion were Regular Baptists.

These Welsh members having united with the Greenfield Church, soon became a prosperous branch of that body, holding covenant meetings and enjoying occasional preaching. In the Spring of 1833, they took letters of dismission and organized as the First Baptist Church of Carbondale, with forty-three constituent members. Their public worship was chiefly conducted in the Welsh language, which is said to be peculiarly rich in the expression of religious truths and emotions, but was little less than harsh discord and unmeaning jargon to the unaccustomed ear of their American brethren, who were consequently still left destitute of a religious home and regular preaching. Thus excluded from congenial privileges, the few who had settled in the place, remained for a number of years, attending the meetings of other denominations, until the time seemed to have arrived to erect the Baptist standard and rally to its support and defence.

Accordingly a council of brethren from neighboring churches, was convened at Carbondale, Luzerne county, Pennsylvania, March 1st, 1848, and an English church was recognized, of seven members, three males and four females, as the Berean Baptist Church of Carbondale. The following persons were constituent members, viz., Rev. Daniel E. Bowen, John B. Lewis, Geo. R. Haskins, Mary Bowen, Sarah Glover, Louisa L. Berry and Mary J. Cramer. The last two are still esteemed members of the church. The public services of recognition were conducted by Revs. John Miller, Henry Curtis, Charles Miller, Rial Tower and Silas Finn; the first of whom officiated as moderator, and the last acted as clerk of the council. The occasion must have been one

of peculiar interest and anxiety to the seven members of this infant church, situated as they were, in the midst of a great and growing population, rife with party and prejudice; also, destitute in a great measure of the ordinary means of influence and not disposed to resort to the usual modes of acquiring it, how could they hope to sustain the position they had assumed or diffuse the principles they had embraced? The prospect was, indeed, dark and doubtful, except as it was relieved by the spanning bow of promise. Thus sustained, they moved silently and steadily forward, seeking divine aid and employing the appointed means.

At their first business meeting held on the 13th inst., Rev. Daniel E. Bowen was called to the pastoral charge of the church, and measures were taken to secure a suitable site for a house of worship. Also at a special meeting for business, held on the 17th of April following, the plan for a meeting house was adopted and a committee appointed to solicit the necessary material aid. The whole project was, however, finally abandoned, after incurring unnecessary expense and exciting unpleasant feelings. On the 29th inst., Mr. Enoch Jones was chosen Deacon of the church, and continued in that office until March 15th, 1851, when he took a letter of dismission and returned to the Welsh Church. Mr. Bowen having served the church as pastor some five months, resigned his charge in the Autumn of 1848, and also returned to the Welsh Church. During his brief connection with the Berean Church, five were added to its membership by baptism, 11 by letter and one was received on experience. When the church united with the Association in the Fall of that year, it embraced 22 communicants.

The church was now left destitute of a settled pastor and stated preaching, but continued to sustain covenant and conference meetings, the clerk of the church, Mr. D. W. Halsted, usually leading the public services, and occasionally reading a printed sermon. Rev. Henry Curtis became pastor of the church, in February, 1849, and continued to preach for them one-half of the time until January, 1851, when he resigned his charge and retired from the field, highly respected by the church and community. During that period, the church received frequent and valuable accessions to its membership, both by letter and baptism. Mr. Homer Grennell was chosen Deacon of the church, August 18th, 1849, and still serves the cause in that capacity with great usefulness and general acceptance. In 1850, the meeting house, formerly owned and occupied by the Methodist Society, was purchased and moved into its present location. By remodeling and repairing, it was made convenient and comfortable. Rev. Charles Griffin was the third pastor of the church. His labors commenced in March, 1851, and extended through the year. He was ordained as pastor of the church, on the 22d of May following, by a council convened for that purpose. While under his charge, a number were received into the fellowship of the church and others dismissed. On the 20th of March of that year, Messrs. Francis Perkins and A. O. Hanford, were appointed Deacons of the church; the former, after having faithfully served the cause in that capacity a number of years, took a dismission and removed from the place; the latter is still an esteemed member and efficient Deacon of the church. During the Summer of 1852,

while destitute of a pastor, the members sustained stated meetings and enjoyed an occasional supply from abroad. Thus they continued until October of that year, when Rev. Frederick Glanville became the fourth pastor of the church. Soon after his settlement "the work of the Lord was graciously revived; saints were moved to labor and pray, and sinners to repent and believe." His sermons were exceedingly able and highly prized. In March, 1853, he, however, unexpectedly resigned his charge and abruptly retired from the field.

Mr. E. L. Bailey commenced supplying the church in May, 1853. He was ordained as pastor, January 12th, 1854, and still continues to sustain that relation. At the same time, Messrs. Homer Grennell, Francis Perkins and A. O. Hanford, were also ordained as Deacons of the church. This interesting occasion was followed by a short series of evening meetings, in which Rev. C. A. Fox rendered acceptable assistance. During the meeting a few persons were hopefully converted and most of the members measurably revived.

The remaining portion of this sketch, will, perhaps, be fairly presented in a few extracts from the annual letters of the church to the Association. They say in the Fall of 1855, that they enjoy the stated ministry of the word and ordinances of the Gospel, and sustain two weekly prayer meetings and a flourishing Sabbath School of about a hundred scholars. Again, in the Autumn of 1856, they say that they continue to enjoy the stated means of grace, and have received some accessions to their membership. They are also making an effort to secure the necessary means to erect a suitable house of worship, with favorable indications of

ultimate success. One brother has pledged a thousand dollars for the object, and other members have subscribed equally liberal in proportion to their means, while the citizens generally seem disposed to render material aid. Finally, in their letter to the Association in 1857, they report 58 communicants, and say that they have done something for various objects of Christian benevolence abroad on a systematic plan, but most of their limited means are required at home to support regular preaching and build their meeting house, the foundation of which is completed, and the frame is being erected. It is to be constructed of wood, in the Doric style of architecture, 40 by 64 feet on the ground, and well proportioned in height, with a graceful spire and spacious audience-rooms, and when finished and furnished, will cost some five thousand dollars. This young church formed in faith, yet feebleness, in the midst of a needy and numerous population, has deservedly enjoyed the favorable notice and fostering care of the Pennsylvania Baptist Convention, receiving timely aid and frequent appropriations, until it has well-nigh secured a prosperous and permanent position.

The meeting house was finally completed as proposed, and dedicated to the worship of God, November 29th, 1859, by appropriate and impressive religious services.

COVINGTON CHURCH.

It is an occasion of regret that we have been unable to secure the necessary materials for a suitable notice of this feeble church. The following facts, however, have been gleaned from the published minutes of the Association and early records of the Greenfield Church.

As early as February, 1818, Messrs. Samuel Calender, Senior and Junior, were appointed by this church "to visit our brethren and sisters over the mountain, and exhort them to their duty." Again in September, 1820, one person from "over the mountain" was baptized by Rev. Nathaniel Otis and admitted as a member of the Greenfield Church. A covenant meeting of this church was also held, November 14th, 1829, at Turnersville, in Covington, Luzerne county, Pennsylvania, at which Mira Holgate, Geo. G. S. Jones and his wife, Elizabeth, related their Christian experience and were baptized on the following day by Rev. James Clark. Again on the 17th of April, 1830, at a covenant meeting held by the above church in "Drinker's Beech," as Covington was called, Hannah Rice was received by letter and John Copeland was baptized on a profession of faith, by Rev. Wm. House. On the 20th of November following, Mr. John Holgate was appointed Deacon of this branch of the Greenfield Church, as it was now considered.

The brethren and sisters composing this branch, continued to hold covenant meetings occasionally and transact such church business as was necessary for their spiritual interests and the general prosperity of the cause in their immediate vicinity. Their number

was gradually increased by occasional additions by letter and baptism. The pastor of Greenfield Church continued to preach for them from time to time and administer the ordinances as occasion required.

Thus the cause was sustained and measurably prospered until shortly previous to the anniversary of the Association in the Autumn of 1849, when the Covington Church was organized with sixteen constituent members. Rev. James Thompson became pastor of this feeble church and continued to sustain that relation during some two years, dividing his labors in 1850, between this and the Blakely Church. Mr. Charles L. Holgate was appointed clerk, and Mr. Godfrey Jones Deacon of the church—positions they still occupy. In the Autumn of 1850, the church report to the Association, one received by baptism and two by letter, increasing their membership to nineteen, and say in their letter, that they are at peace among themselves and continue to sustain an interesting and promising Sabbath School. Mr. Thompson also continues to preach for them occasionally. In the Autumn of 1851, they were destitute of a pastor, but continued to labor in harmony. During most of the following year they were supplied with preaching once in two weeks by Messrs. Charles Parker and Benj. Miller, licentiates of Abington Church. Under the labors of these brethren the church was strengthened and a number of the impenitent were hopefully converted, six of whom were baptized by Rev. Wm. K. Mott, of Hyde Park. They report to the Association in the Autumn of 1852, six baptisms and 23 communicants. Since this date the membership of the church has continued gradually

to diminish. The above brethren supplied the church during a part of 1853, but without any apparent results. In the Fall of the following year, the church report 19 communicants and say in their letter to the Association, that they are few and scattered over a wide field. They mourn on account of their want of zeal in the cause of the Master. They are entirely destitute of preaching, yet some four or five endeavor to meet once a month for religious worship. A similar state of things continued during 1855 and extended into the following year. The church report to the Association in the Autumn of 1856, 12 as their total membership, and say in their letter that they do not hold covenant meetings regularly but meet occasionally to recount the mercies of the Lord and encourage the hearts and hopes of each other. Rev. O. L. Hall preaches for them once in two weeks. In the Fall of 1857, the church made no report to the Association. It is, however, presumed that they were destitute of stated preaching and still few and feeble. The field occupied by this small church is one of growing importance; comparatively solitary and secluded formerly, it is now open to trade and travel by rail and road, inviting a needy and numerous population.

LEBANON CHURCH.

The few facts embraced in this sketch have been diligently collected from various sources, but chiefly from the published minutes of the Association.

A Baptist church was organized with nine members, in Lebanon, Wayne county, Pennsylvania, prior to the meeting of the Association in the Autumn of 1831, when it was admitted into that body, Mr. Alfred Wilmarth receiving the hand of fellowship on behalf of the church. They report in the Fall of 1832, four received by letter, and 13 as their total membership, and also say in their letter to the Association, that they have been supplied with preaching one-fourth of the time during the past year, by Rev. Enoch Owen, and that they remain firm in the faith of the Gospel and desire to be guided by the Saviour in all things. Again, they say in their letter to the Association of the following year, that having obtained help from God, they have maintained their integrity in the midst of trials, enemies and persecution, and are striving together for the faith once delivered to the saints. They also report three received by letter, and 16 as their total membership.

In 1834, one was added to the church by baptism, increasing their membership to 17, but in the following year, two were dismissed by letter, diminishing it to 15. Thus this little band continued under the faithful labors of Mr. Owen, until his decease, November 14th, 1836. His death is noticed in the minutes of the Association of the following year, in fitting terms of fraternal affection. He is represented by those who knew him personally, as an excellent man and faithful minister.

The church was now left without stated preaching, but continued to maintain an independent existence until the Autumn of 1845, when it disbanded and divided, one portion becoming a branch of the Mt. Pleasant Church, and the other uniting with the Bethany Church. Little advantage was, however, gained by the former union, as the Mt. Pleasant and Lebanon Church, as it was now called, held a meeting at the house of Mr. Lewis Peck, January 9th, 1851, and agreed, according to the record, "to dissolve for the present." The faint hope of a future resurrection expressed in this agreement, has not yet been realized by this church, but was anticipated by that portion of Lebanon Church, which had become a branch of Bethany Church, as will appear by the following account furnished in part by Mr. S. Owen, son of Rev. Enoch Owen, and clerk of the present Lebanon Church from 1852 to '55.

The branch of Bethany Church in Lebanon, was accustomed to hold Sabbath and covenant meetings, and to transact such business as the interests of the cause, or inclination of the members, seemed to indicate or require. In the Winter of 1847 and '48, Rev. Andrew Hopper, pastor of Bethany Church, commenced preaching for this branch one-fourth of the time. The population of the place, having somewhat increased and a number of Baptist members moved into the vicinity, the proper time seemed to have arrived to organized as an independent church. Accordingly, at a covenant meeting of this branch, held June 22d, 1849, a committee was appointed to meet the church at Bethany, and confer with the members in reference to the proposed organization. The proposition having been ap-

proved by the church at Bethany, the members in Lebanon, organized as an independent body on the 18th of August following, and adopted Articles of Faith and a church Covenant. On the 30th of the same month, they were recognized as the First Lebanon Church, with 16 constituent members, by a council convened from neighboring churches for that purpose. Three persons were baptized on the same day and received as members of this infant church. When the church united with the Association in the Autumn of that year, it embraced 19 communicants. Mr. Hopper continued to supply this church until the 1st of May, 1850, when he resigned the pastoral charge and removed to Abington.

The church, now left destitute of stated preaching, continued to sustain prayer and covenant meetings and a Sabbath School of some thirty scholars. They report to the Association of that year eight received by letter and on experience, and 27 as their total membership. The services of Rev. L. L. Still, pastor of Bethany Church, were enjoyed one-fourth of the time during most of 1851. Under his labors the church was measurably revived and "some souls enjoyed a sense of pardon for sin." Rev. James P. Stalbird was the next pastor. He commenced his labors in the Spring of 1852, and preached for the church one-fourth of the time for one year. Near the close of his services, a series of meetings were held and "some signs of good were apparent." Rev. Sanford Leach was his successor. He preached for the church one sermon on each alternate Sabbath, from July, 1853, until May of the following year. During the Winter a series of

meetings were held, resulting in good to the church and community. Some backsliders were reclaimed and a few sinners hopefully converted. Mr. Stalbird was again invited to preach for the church. He accepted the invitation and commenced his labors in May, 1854, preaching for them one-half of the time, but how long we are not informed. His congregations were comparatively large and attentive.

Little of especial interest transpired in the church until the Winter of 1855 and '56, when an interesting work of grace was experienced under the labors of Rev. Newell Callender, and Mr. B. B. Bunting, a licentiate of Aldenville Church. The meetings were commenced in January, 1856, at the "Red School House," and continued until the 1st of April following. The gracious work begun at this place, spread to adjacent neighborhoods where large numbers flocked to hear the Word and witness the baptism of converts. Mr. Callender now accepted the pastoral charge of the church. In the Autumn of 1856, the church report to the Association, 13 baptisms and 45 communicants. In the Fall of 1857, the church embraced 39 communicants. They say in their letter of that year, that they enjoy peace and harmony among themselves, and desire to drink deep into the spirit of the Gospel. They are destitute of regular preaching, but continue to sustain a weekly prayer meeting. Messrs. Aaron Pulis, Gaylon Wilmarth and Arthur Niles, are the present Deacons of this church. When they were chosen to this office or how faithfully they have served the cause, we are not definitely informed.

HYDE PARK CHURCH.

Except a mere outline furnished by the pastor of this church, the materials for this notice have been gathered from the published minutes of the Association, and other reliable sources.

Hyde Park, Luzerne county, Pennsylvania, is one of a cluster of thriving villages that have recently sprung up on a pleasant locality situated in a broad and central portion of the Lackawanna Valley; Providence being about two miles north; Dunmore about the same distance north-east; and Scranton about a half mile south-east. These villages and vicinity embrace a numerous and enterprising population attracted chiefly by the mining and manufacturing interests.

As early as 1794 Rev. Wm. Bishop, a Baptist, and the first minister of any denomination, living in the valley, settled with his family at the present site of Hyde Park, where he occasionally preached and endeavored to diffuse his distinctive principles among the pioneer population. Under his faithful labors conversions frequently occurred and a number of persons residing in the place and along the valley, united with the Pittston Church of which he was the esteemed pastor. Indeed, the number was so great that this church was known in 1802 as the "Pittston and Providence Church." In 1806, it disbanded and a small portion of the former membership became a branch of Abington Church, leaving the remaining portion scattered and exposed like sheep without a shepherd. The Athertons, and perhaps some others, living near Hyde Park remained firm to their faith, so that the place was not

left entirely destitute of the salt of Baptist sentiments.

A Baptist church, however, was re-organized at Pittston in the Autumn of 1833, and resumed its former influence in diffusing Baptist principles and moulding the religious opinions of the heterogeneous population scattered for miles up the Lackawanna Valley. Rev. Wm. K. Mott, pastor of this church, preached occasionally at Hyde Park, and baptized a number of converts into the fellowship of the Pittston Church. Thus the cause was situated and continued for some years. The brethren and sisters living at Hyde Park and vicinity, however, finally decided to organize as an independent church. The council of recognition was convened at that place September 12th, 1849, Rev. John Miller officiating as moderator and Rev. Silas Finn acting as clerk. Twenty-three persons, nine males and fourteen females, presented themselves with letters of dismission from their respective churches and received fellowship as the Hyde Park Baptist Church. Rev. Wm. K. Mott was one of the constituent members and pastor of the church, a relation he still sustains, after years of patient toil and persevering effort. Messrs. E. A. Ather-ton and J. C. Dunn were chosen Deacons of the church; both have since moved from the place.

When the church united with the Association in the Autumn of 1850, they report one baptized and six dismissed, reducing their number to eighteen, and say that they occupy a difficult yet important field. They have a flourishing Sabbath School and ample library. They also report in 1851, two baptized, one received by letter and 21 as their total membership, and say they are about to erect a suitable house of worship.

Through the indomitable perseverance of the pastor and liberality of members and friends, the house was completed as proposed. It was built of brick, 38 by 55 feet, at a cost of \$2600, and dedicated on the first Sabbath of January, 1852, with appropriate religious services. They report to the Association of that year, seven received by baptism, five by letter and 33 as their total membership and say in their letter that their congregations have increased somewhat since they have occupied their new house, and covenant and prayer meetings are regularly held. During the past Winter a glorious shower of mercy has fallen on a portion of the valley some miles above, and a few drops have descended on this thirsty spot, causing them to thank God and take courage.

The above facts furnish, perhaps, a fair sample of the many trials and partial triumphs of this church, situated in the midst of a rapidly increasing yet constantly fluctuating population. A few more extracts from the annual letters of the church, will continue the outline of its history and must complete this imperfect sketch. In 1853 the church report five received by baptism and 40 as their total membership, and in the following year, say in their letter to the Association, that they cannot communicate much of glad tidings and would not indulge in delusive hopes, yet they still hope to see a gracious revival in the valley, when these dry bones shall be breathed into life and moulded into form. Again, they say in their letter of 1855, that no important changes have marked their course during the past year. They think it becomes them and others to repent and forsake their sins and coldness in private

rather than publish their confessions annually in a penitential letter. In the following year they say that they enjoy regular preaching and sustain a weekly prayer meeting and flourishing Sabbath School. Finally in 1857, they report to the Association 49 as their total membership, and say they have nothing of especial interest to communicate. Such has been the uniform course of this church under the labors of their esteemed pastor. Messrs. Thompson Peckens, Nathaniel Halsted and Reuben A. Henry are the present Deacons of the church.

BERLIN CHURCH.

A house of worship was erected in Berlin before the church was organized—thus reversing the usual order. The inhabitants of “Smith Hill,” in Berlin, Wayne county, Pennsylvania, met at the “Old Smith School House,” on Saturday evening, February 10th, 1849, to consider the propriety of procuring a site for a meeting house and burying ground. Mr. Charles B. Seaman was called to the chair, and Mr. Samuel A. Silsby chosen secretary. The object of the meeting being stated and approved, a committee of seven was appointed to “fix on said location,” and report at a subsequent meeting. At a meeting held at the same place, on the 17th of March following, the above committee reported that they had selected a suitable site for a meeting house and burying ground, “upon lands belonging to John Smith, situated near the house of Thomas W. Jones, on the west side of the road leading from Honesdale to Big Eddy.” The report was accepted and the following persons were appointed and authorized to make contracts, collect funds and procure materials, viz., John Smith, Benjamin Garratt, Charles B. Seaman and Rev. Andrew Hopper. The committee also reported, and the meeting adopted a preamble and resolutions defining the conditions of occupancy; the following extract of which, will sufficiently indicate their general character, viz., “The said house of worship shall be designated as ‘the First Baptist Church of Smith Hill,’ and be free to all denominations believing in the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and holding the doctrines of repentance, regeneration, baptism and a future state of rewards and punishments.”

The work was promptly commenced and vigorously prosecuted; the house was completed and dedicated on the 14th of September following, with appropriate religious services. The house is a neat structure in a pleasant location.

The members of Bethany Church, residing in the Smith settlement, were accustomed, from the Spring of 1836, to hold stated meetings for covenant and conference. They met for this purpose in the new meeting house for the first time, on the 22d of September, 1849. The day being stormy but few were present—none except male members. The subject of organizing an independent church, was, however, introduced and discussed and it was decided to give public notice on the Sabbath of a meeting to further consider the propriety of the proposed measure. Accordingly on the 30th inst., at the close of the usual services, an invitation was given to all interested in the organization of a church, to remain. "A goodly number tarried." After a full interchange of views it was determined to organize as an independent church, and a committee was appointed to convene a council and also to call on all the members of Bethany Church, or other churches, residing in the vicinity and procure letters of dismission for them from their respective churches.

The council, composed of delegates from Bethany, Lebanon, Honesdale, Damascus, Paupack Eddy and Ten Mile River, convened according to invitation on Thursday the 25th of October, 1849, in the new meeting house, and organized by appointing Rev. J. T. Mitchell, moderator, and Dea. C. M. Hayden, clerk,

Twenty-two members, six males and sixteen females, presented letters of commendation from Bethany Church, together with their Articles of Faith and church Covenant, and were recognized by the council according to their request, as the First Baptist Church of Berlin, by the usual order of religious services. The following ministers took part in the public services of recognition, viz., D. F. Leach, Andrew Hopper, H. Curtis, M. M. Everts and J. T. Mitchell.

Rev. A. Hopper became the first pastor of this infant church—his services to be shared with the Bethany and Lebanon Churches—and continued to sustain that relation until the Spring of 1850, when he resigned his charge of these churches and removed from the vicinity. The church was now left destitute of stated preaching, yet weekly prayer and monthly covenant meetings were regularly held and occasionally well attended.

On the 3d of May, 1851, Rev. J. P. Stalbird having settled at Smith Hill, united with the church by letter from Ten Mile River, and accepted the pastoral charge. The church also resolved itself into a committee of the whole to visit delinquent members. On the 16th of August following, delegates were appointed to attend the Abington Association and instructed to ask admission into that body. The request was granted and the church admitted into the Association with twenty-seven communicants.

On the 25th of September, Mr. John Smith deceased. He was one of the constituent members and occupied a prominent place in the business affairs of the church and congregation, and bore most of the expense of build-

ing the meeting house. On the 1st of May, 1852, the pastor was released one-half of the time to supply the Lebanon Church. The resignation of Mr. Stalbird was accepted on the 2d of April, 1853, and Rev. Sanford Leach was secured as his successor. Under the labors of Mr. Leach the cause was revived and harmony restored. The work was gradual but gracious. An occasional conversion and baptism stirred the hearts and strengthened the hands of pastor and people. Three persons were baptized on the 5th of June following, and on the 6th of August four were received as candidates for that ordinance, and two united with the church by letter. Again, on the 25th of November four related their experience and were accepted as candidates for baptism. Thus the gracious work moved gradually forward. They report to the Association in 1854, thirty-one as their total membership and say in their letter, that a spirit of union is manifest, and a willingness to pray and labor for the advancement of the cause and conversion of souls. Mr. Leach resigned his pastorate last Spring; since that time, Rev. A. Hopper has preached for them every alternate Sabbath. Covenant meetings are well attended and an interest is felt in every good cause.

The church was, however, soon left destitute of stated preaching, and the cause began to decline. Thus they remained until the Spring of 1856, when Rev. Newell Callender made them a timely visit, and continued to preach for them occasionally. On the 9th of August, of that year, he was chosen pastor of the church, and Mr. Joseph N. Fairchild, attending the University at Hamilton, New York, was licensed to preach the Gos-

pel, and dismissed from the church. He has since been ordained to the ministry at West Troy, New York, where he soon finished his course and entered upon his reward. In November following, Mr. Callender held a series of evening meetings with the church. The effort was blessed and the membership of the church doubled. They report to the Association in 1857, 25 received by baptism, and 50 as their total membership, and say in their letter, that they have great reason to thank the Lord, that they still live and remain firm in the faith of the Gospel. They held a protracted meeting last November, in which their pastor labored devotedly, and God owned and blessed the effort. Backsliders were reclaimed and sinners converted. They have frequently visited the baptismal waters. Mr. Callender still labors with them one-fourth of the time; their congregations are large and covenant meetings well attended.

NEWTON CHURCH.

This church is a continuation of the Falls Church, the origin of which is involved in much obscurity. We are not informed as to the precise date of its organization. It was, however, constituted with six members, some time in the Spring of 1828, in the southern portion of Falls—now Newton—Luzerne county, Pennsylvania. This little band had been gathered chiefly through the instrumentality of Mr. Isaac D. Jones, a licentiate of the church at Exeter, on the opposite side of the Susquehanna. The Falls Church, embracing nine communicants, was admitted into the Association at its annual meeting, held in the following Autumn. Mr. Jones continued to supply the church with general acceptance, and on the 21st of January, 1830, he was ordained as an Evangelist, by a council convened at the request of the Exeter and Northmoreland Churches. The church at Falls was represented in the council, and the services of Mr. Jones were retained. Soon after his ordination, the church “enjoyed a precious revival” under his faithful labors. Thirteen were received by letter and baptism, and the membership was more than doubled. Mr. Jones continued to preach occasionally for the church, until the Autumn of 1833, when, it is supposed, he retired from the field. They report to the Association of that year, seven received by baptism, and 30 as their total membership, and also say in their letter, that they have received some of the precious blessings of converting grace and taken sweet counsel together, in meditating on the law of the Lord and walking in the way of his commands.

This, however, was the meridian of their prosperity. From this time, the church from various causes, began to gradually decline. Without regular preaching and pastoral care, the members soon became distracted and disheartened. Some abandoned the cause and united with other denominations. Others yielded to the power of appetite and fell into habits of intemperance. Thus the cause was wasted and weakened. A feeble effort was occasionally made to raise the falling standard and rally the scattered forces. Rev. John Miller preached occasionally for them, from 1836 to '39, and Rev. James Clark supplied them a part of the time during 1840; but all to little purpose; the church had become too weak to be revived. Covenant meetings, however, were occasionally held until the Spring of 1845, when they were entirely suspended. It gives us pleasure to make honorable mention of such as remained faithful. Catharine Litts and Catharine Smith, since deceased, with a few others, were the last to desert the waning cause or distrust the divine promise. But they, too, finally retired from the unequal conflict, to weep in solitude over the desolations of Zion. The light was now extinguished and the lamp removed.

In the Winter of 1849 and '50, Rev. Silas Finn visited the place and sought out the scattered members. By his advice a meeting was called on the 2d of February, of that Winter; the Falls Church was formally disbanded and the Newton Church was immediately organized with nine constituent members. Articles of Faith and a church Covenant were also considered and adopted. On the 20th of the same month this infant church was recognized by a council of ministers and

members convened for that purpose from Benton, Eaton, Exeter, and Northmoreland churches. Rev. Wm. Frear officiated as moderator, and Rev. Silas Finn acted as clerk of the council. Rev. Geo. W. Schofield and others were present and participated in the exercises. It was a season of peculiar interest as well as anxiety to the few members of this feeble church. In the midst of opposition, without a house of worship of their own, they could but feel the importance of the step they had taken and responsibility of the position they had assumed. The pastoral services of Mr. Finn were soon after engaged for one-half of the time and were enjoyed during most of three years following. His labors were highly prized and greatly prospered. Frequent additions were received, and within a few months the membership was doubled. When the church united with the Association in the following Autumn, it embraced eighteen communicants.

In 1851 a shower of grace descended on the thirsty soil, causing the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Some fifty persons were hopefully converted in the vicinity; ten of whom were baptized by the pastor and admitted to fellowship in the church. They report to the Association of that year, thirty-one as their total membership. Their history during the year following, is marked by few changes of especial interest or importance. The members lived in peace and labored in harmony. The pastor did not devote his efforts exclusively to the spiritual interests of the church and congregation, but he was accustomed to visit surrounding neighborhoods, preaching in school houses or private dwellings, whenever and wherever a door was opened

or opportunity offered. He also sought out the neglected and supplied the destitute with Bibles and Testaments.

Mr. Finn having resigned, Rev. John Miller and his wife united with the church by letter in 1853, and he accepted the pastoral charge—to preach one-half of the time. His labors were measurably prospered. They report to the Association of that year, eight received by baptism and 38 as their total membership, and also say in their letter, that covenant meetings are well attended with increasing interest. In the following year one was received by baptism and a usual degree of prosperity continued. In the Winter of 1854 and '55 an especial effort was made within the bounds of the church, under the direction of Mr. Benj. Miller, a licentiate of Abington church, and son of the venerable pastor. The meetings were blessed and a number of the impenitent hopefully converted, who were subsequently baptized and admitted into the church. On the 18th of April, 1855, Mr. Benj. Miller was ordained to the work of the ministry by a council convened in Newton, at the request of the Abington Church, of which he was a member. He now became associated with his father as pastor of Newton Church—each preaching one-half of the time. This arrangement was continued until the decease of the senior pastor, February 19th, 1857, when Mr. Benj. Miller became sole pastor. Under his labors the church has prospered and made some progress. They report to the Association in 1856, three received by baptism and forty-four as their total membership. They also say in their letter to the Association in 1857, that they enjoy the

faithful labors of Rev. Charles Parker, one-fourth of the time. Their congregations are large and attentive. They mourn the death of one of their most devoted members, Rev. John Miller, a faithful minister, father and friend. Messrs. S. H. Cooper and Benj. Rosen-crans are the esteemed Deacons of this church.

WEST ABINGTON CHURCH.

The First Abington Church extended over the "West Settlement" for nearly half a century. Some of its constituent members and many of its subsequent converts resided in that neighborhood. Messrs. Jonathan Dean, George Gardner, James Dean and Phineas Reynolds, were among its original members; their names also frequently appear in the early records of that church. In March, 1803, "a meeting for public worship" was held at the house of Mr. Jonathan Dean, and covenant and communion seasons were also attended at the same place in July, November, December and March following. In April, 1804, it was agreed to hold "preparatory meetings and sacrament" at the house of Mr. George Gardner on the first Sabbath of each alternate month, commencing with July following. This arrangement was continued for a number of years, with occasional changes of time and place as convenience suggested or necessity required; the meetings also becoming less frequent as other fields were entered by the pastor and occupied by the church. Provision was also made for holding prayer and conference meetings in the absence of Mr. Miller, as he was frequently detained from his appointments by funerals, weddings and other causes. In February, 1807, the church selected Messrs. Jonathan Dean, George Gardner and Phineas Reynolds "to appoint and keep up meetings in the 'West Settlement.'" Experience suggested other officers, and circumstances developed new gifts. In December following Mr. James Dean was chosen treasurer, and in January, 1808, Messrs. Jeremiah Cap-

well and Daniel Reynolds were appointed leaders of the singing for this settlement. For many years the principal clerk and one of the Deacons of the church were also residents of the neighborhood.

The foregoing facts and reflections will, perhaps, sufficiently indicate the future progress of the cause and privileges of the members, in this portion of the old church. This interest, however, having come from the root and continued under the rind of the original tree, finally shot out and soon became a vigorous branch, producing abundant fruit and ample foliage. Sustaining this intimate relation and dependence, it was sensibly affected by revivals or reverses originating in other portions of the church, and in turn contributed in no small degree to the trials and triumphs of the general cause. In January, 1838, a revival commencing with this branch, extended to the whole church and exerted a lasting influence. At this date, Rev. James Clark having closed a season of successful labors in Benton, at the request of the brethren in West Abington, came to their aid and commenced a series of meetings in the "Union School House." The minds of the people seemed to anticipate a gracious work. His first sermon preached from 2 Samuel, 5: 24, produced marked and immediate results. "The sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees," was distinctly heard and promptly heeded. Saints began at once "to bestir" themselves to earnest effort, and sinners to anxious solicitude. This revival thus commenced, continued deepening and widening in its onward sweep, until it broke over its banks and bore away all barriers, flooding and fertilizing the entire field.

In the following Summer, the members in West Abington commenced building their present meeting house, which was subsequently completed and dedicated to the worship of God, as is believed, on the 4th of July, 1839. It is a plain but substantial building, pleasantly and was when erected, conveniently situated in the midst of a moral and thrifty community of farmers, but passing years and a growing village have left it comparatively isolated and antiquated. Besides building a house of worship, an almost unanimous effort was made by the members to become an independent church, and secure the pastoral care of Rev. James Clark, but both of these cherished objects were finally yielded and abandoned in filial deference to the supposed wishes of their venerable pastor. They continued to receive his usual care and consented to remain subject to the old church, though riveling the "East Settlement," in pecuniary means and benevolent contributions. At a subsequent period a similar attempt was made to secure the ministerial labors of Rev. William McKowan, who was a member of this branch and in needy circumstances, but was also defeated by the same silent, yet effectual influence.

Mr. Miller continued preaching for this branch once in two weeks until the Spring of 1850, when at his suggestion, Rev. Andrew Hopper, of Bethany, became junior pastor of the church, arranging with the senior pastor to alternate their labors between the "East and West Settlements." During the Summer, however, relations between the pastors becoming somewhat complicated and entangled, the members in the "West Settlement," finally concluded in the following Au-

tumn, that it was their bounden duty to separate from the old church and organize as an independent body. Accordingly, letters of dismission were secured with the cordial consent of the old church, and a council of brethren from nine neighboring churches, was convened December 19th of that year, at the meeting house in West Abington, Rev. Wm. K. Mott officiating as moderator, and Rev. Rial Tower acting as clerk. Fifty-six persons, 23 males and 33 females, all with letters of dismission from the old church, except one, then presented themselves with their Articles of Faith, to the council and received fellowship as the West Abington Church.

Thus organized, the church proceeded to appoint necessary officers and transact such business as the interests of the cause and community seemed to demand. On the 28th of December following, Mr. Isaac Tillinghast, who had officiated as Deacon in the old church, was called to the same position in the new, and Messrs. William Dean, E. D. Gardner and Benedict Taylor, were also chosen Deacons of the church. On the 15th of February, 1851, Mr. E. P. Tillinghast was appointed clerk of the church, and Revs. John Miller and Andrew Hopper were invited to continue their pastoral relations. The former declining the invitation, the latter became sole pastor of this infant church, preaching for them one-half of the time until April, 1852, when he resigned his charge and retired from the field. Under his labors the cause was measurably prospered. When the church united with the Association in the Autumn of 1851, they report one received on experience, seven by baptism and 23 by letter, in-

creasing their total membership to 87. In the Spring of 1852, Rev. Sanford Leach became pastor of the church and sustained that relation through the current year. During that time the church was called to mourn the death of Dea. Tillinghast, a man universally esteemed and lamented. A. W. Taylor a young man of much promise also died in the triumphs of faith. Mr. Leach near the close of his labors was aided in a series of meetings by Rev. C. H. Harvey, resulting in the hopeful conversion of a number of persons.

In the Spring of 1853, Rev. Charles A. Fox became pastor of the church, dividing his labors between this and the old church. He still sustains this relation with great faithfulness and general favor. Under his ministry the church has enjoyed uniform peace and prosperity. The clerk of the church having been removed by death in July, 1853, Mr. Alvinzy Gardner was appointed to that office in August following—a position he still occupies, besides making himself generally useful. The church report to the Association in the Fall of that year, 28 baptisms and 106 communicants, and say in their letter that their interest in the great moral reforms of the day, is still unabated; they believe the cause of God and humanity are identical.

Few changes of especial interest have marked or marred the remaining history of this young but vigorous church. The members have sustained Sabbath Schools and prayer meetings, and manifested a commendable spirit of Christian benevolence. They have also borne a uniform and united testimony against slavery as the "sum of all villanies," and intemperance as the source of untold crime and misery. The

church report to the Association in the Autumn of 1857, four baptisms and 113 communicants, and say in their letter that they are endeavoring to sustain the cause of Christ at home, and contribute to its universal spread in the world.

UNION CHURCH.

Most of the members of this church reside in the eastern part of Clifford, and southern portion of Herrick, Susquehanna county, Pennsylvania. "The city," or McCawley's Mills, situated about two miles north of Dundaff, had been for some years an out-station of First Clifford Church, the pastor, Rev. C. Miller, preaching here once a month. His visits, however, were discontinued in the Autumn of 1850. Ministers of the Methodist, Presbyterian and Old School Baptist denominations also preached occasionally in the vicinity.

In the Spring of 1851, Mr. D. W. Halsted, a member of First Clifford Church, commenced holding stated meetings in a school house at "the city." The services consisted of singing, prayer and reading sermons. The congregations soon became comparatively large and attentive. In the latter part of June of that year, the propriety of organizing an independent church was introduced and discussed. Soon after, a number of persons residing in the vicinity, who had been connected with the Herrick and Second Clifford churches, recently disbanded, were visited and consulted. Eight living members were found among the ruins of Herrick Church, but none survived the fall of Second Clifford to unite in the new interest. Eight from First Clifford Church, and one from Berean Church of Carbondale, also united with the eight from Herrick, and organized as an independent church.

On the 25th of July, 1851, a council of recognition was convened at "the city," composed of delegates

from West Abington, Benton, Jackson and Gibson, Greenfield and Carbondale churches. Rev. J. B. Worden officiated as moderator of the council, and Rev. Daniel E. Bowen acted as clerk. Seventeen brethren and sisters presented letters of dismission from their respective churches, together with their Articles of Faith and church covenant, and were recognized as the Union Baptist Church. The public services were conducted by Revs. Charles Griffin, J. L. Richmond, A. Hopper, D. E. Bowen and J. W. Parker. The interview was pleasant and profitable. "Much," says one who was present, "of the Spirit's influence was felt; it was good to be there."

On the following day two united with the church by letter and one by baptism. The ordinances were also administered by Rev. J. W. Parker, and his services engaged for one-fourth of the time—the remaining portion to be occupied by Mr. D. W. Halsted in reading sermons and other religious services. The church was prospered and encouraged with frequent additions by letter and baptism. At the first covenant meeting of the church, held on the 23d of August following, Messrs. Alanson Halsted and Thomas Burns were appointed Deacons; they still continue to serve the cause in this capacity with general acceptance. When the church united with the Association in the Autumn of that year, they report nine received by letter and baptism, and twenty-seven as their total membership.

From this time until the following May, they were deprived of the labors of their pastor who was prostrated by a painful and protracted sickness. During that time, however, covenant meetings were sustained and

stated services held on the Sabbath. An unpleasant case of discipline was faithfully conducted and amicably settled without discord or distraction. In the Spring of 1852, the pastor being restored to comparative health, resumed his labors and continued to preach for the church one-fourth of the time until the 23d of April, 1853, when he resigned his charge and retired from the field.

The church, now left destitute of a settled pastor, was regularly supplied by Mr. D. W. Halsted, previously licensed to "improve his gift" within its bounds. By his changing with neighboring ministers, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was occasionally celebrated in the church. The instrumentalities employed were blessed; Sabbath and covenant meetings increased in interest until the house where they met was thronged with attentive hearers. The members were moved to prayerful effort, and sinners to seek salvation. In December of that year, meetings were held days and evenings. Rev. William A. Miller, of Greenfield, came to their aid and assisted in the services. A few sermons were also preached by Rev. William K. Mott, of Hyde Park, and Rev. Silas Finn, of Benton. On the 1st of January, 1854, nine precious youth were baptized and received into the church.

On the 25th of February following, Mr. D. W. Halsted was licensed to "improve his gift" within the bounds of the Association, and invited to supply the church one-half of the time, and Rev. Wm. A. Miller was also chosen pastor of the church—to occupy the remaining half of the time for one year. In the Summer of 1854, plans were devised and preparations made

for building a house of worship. The frame was erected September 4th of that year, and enclosed, and the house completed during the Winter and Spring following. It was dedicated May 3d, 1855, with appropriate religious services. The house is a neat structure pleasantly located. It is a monument to the enlightened zeal and willing sacrifices of the church and community—especially of the few who bore the burden of the toil and expense. They report to the Association of this year, thirty-five as their total membership, and say in their letter that the past year has been to them one of sacrifice and affliction. They have completed and dedicated a neat and convenient house of worship. A small debt remains to be provided for. They mourn the death of Mr. S. B. Halsted, a young man of much promise, highly esteemed and sincerely lamented. His sister Mary also died in less than a year from the decease of her brother. She was amiable and devoted in life, and happy and triumphant in death. They report to the Association in 1856, one received by baptism, three excluded and thirty-three as their total membership. In December of that year, Rev. William A. Miller was again invited to labor for the church one-fourth or one-half of the time as they might be able to secure the necessary means to reward his services. He commenced his labors on the 13th of January following. During the Spring and Summer of that year the cause seemed to wane and the interest to decline. Unsettled difficulties exerted a blighting influence on the prosperity of the church. Rev. A. O. Stearns succeeded Mr. Miller as pastor of the church. Under his labors peace and harmony have been apparently

restored. They report to the Association in 1857, thirty-one as their total membership, and say they hope to see the salvation of God and pray for a revival of genuine piety. They sustain a Bible Class and Sabbath School.

ASHLAND CHURCH.

A few brethren and sisters, members of various Baptist churches, residing in the vicinity of "Beech Pond," Wayne county, Pennsylvania, met at the house of Mr. Hiram M. Gillett, November 29th, 1851, to consider the propriety of organizing as an independent church. Rev. J. P. Stalbird being present, presided as moderator of the meeting. After a free interchange of views without arriving at any definite conclusion, the meeting adjourned to the 13th of December following.

The above brethren and sisters met again according to adjournment and organized as the Ashland Baptist Church, and adopted Articles of Faith and a church Covenant. Meetings were also held on the 1st and 17th of January, 1852, for mutual encouragement and the transaction of church business. The church met on the 14th of February following, and made arrangements to call a council of recognition, and also appointed the Saturday before the third Sabbath in each month for holding covenant meetings, subsequently changed to the Saturday before the first Sabbath.

The council composed of delegates from West Abington, Berlin, Bethany, Damascus, Honesdale and Ten Mile River churches, convened according to request, March 18th, 1852, in the Methodist Episcopal meeting house of Ashland. On account of the violence of the storm, delegates invited from other churches were unable to attend. The council being organized, ten persons, five males, and five females presented letters of dismission from sister churches as follows, viz., six from Bethany, two from Ten Mile River, one from

Damascus and one from Lebanon, and were recognized by the council as the Ashland Baptist Church by appropriate religious services. The public exercises of recognition, were conducted by Revs. A. Hopper and M. M. Everet.

Rev. J. P. Stalbird preached occasionally for the church until the 28th of May following, when the pastoral labors of Rev. A. Hopper were engaged for a portion of the time. He continued to serve the church in this relation for some two years with general acceptance. The church was aided to some extent by the Pennsylvania Baptist Convention, in sustaining their pastor.

In the Autumn of 1852, the church was admitted into the Association, with twelve communicants. On the 25th of December following, Messrs. Isaac Doughty and Henry Henshaw were chosen Deacons of the church, and the Lord's Supper was appointed to be celebrated once in three months. Covenant meetings continued to be statedly held and were frequently seasons of peculiar interest. Additions were occasionally received by letter and baptism, and the church seems to have enjoyed uninterrupted peace and comparative prosperity. They report to the Association in 1853, six received by baptism and twenty as their total membership.

During the following year, little of general interest transpired in the church. One person was received on experience and one member was excluded. It was evidently a season of coldness and declension. They say in their letter to the Association in 1854, that they have reason to complain of themselves on account of

their apathy and delinquencies. Their prayer meetings are neglected and covenant seasons irregularly attended. There is also a want of brotherly love and heartfelt union. They do not, however, entirely despair; their hope is in the Lord who has so often turned drops of sorrow into fountains of comfort. The Gospel is statedly and faithfully preached by their pastor, Mr. Hopper.

During the following two years the records of the church are a blank, with few exceptions. They did not represent themselves to the Association in 1855 and '56. In May of 1857, Rev. Newell Callender commenced preaching for the church once in two weeks. Under his faithful labors the members soon began to rally and the interest to rise. On the 27th of June following, an interesting covenant meeting was held, and two persons were received on experience and one by baptism. On the 25th of July, "the church," as the record runs, "held their regular covenant meeting at the school house near Mr. Doughty's—members generally present—had a good time." They report to the Association in 1857, one received by baptism and nineteen as their total membership, and say that their congregations are large and attentive, and tokens of good are apparent. The prospects of the church at present are encouraging. An interesting revival is now in successful progress.

SECOND DAMASCUS CHURCH.

This church was organized of persons formerly connected with the First Damascus Church and acting as a branch of that body. They lived chiefly in two adjacent neighborhoods situated on two roads, some six miles west and south-west from the meeting house of the First Church. They had been supplied for some years with stated preaching in their immediate neighborhoods by Rev. J. T. Mitchell "much to their comfort and edification. But living quite remote from the usual place of holding church meetings, it was believed that it would be for the glory of God and extension of his Kingdom to organize as a separate and independent body." Accordingly letters of dismission were taken from the First Damascus Church, and a council of brethren from Clinton, Callicoon, Honesdale and Lebanon churches, was convened in the western portion of Damascus, Wayne county, Pennsylvania, December 19th, 1851. Eleven persons, seven males and four females, presented themselves to the council, and received fellowship as the Second Baptist Church of Damascus. Rev. Henry Curtis acted as moderator of the council and preached the sermon of recognition from Matt. 21: 42.

Rev. John T. Mitchell, one of the constituent members, was immediately chosen pastor of this infant church and continued to serve the cause in that relation with general acceptance until his decease in the Summer of 1856. Mr. John S. Dodge, also one of the constituent members and a licentiate of the church, commenced and has continued preaching occasionally within the bounds of the church.

When the church united with the Association in the Autumn of 1852, it embraced sixteen communicants. At this time the pastor and most of his family were greatly afflicted from severe and protracted sickness. All, however, recovered except a son and daughter. While the labors of the pastor were thus suspended, the church was regularly supplied with preaching by Mr. Dodge. On the 16th of October of that year, Messrs. Levi H. Welton and J. S. Dodge were appointed Deacons of the church, and still sustain that relation. Mr. H. W. Mitchell was also elected clerk of the church and still acts in that capacity.

In 1853 the church report two received by baptism and 23 as their total membership, increased in 1854 to 25, and in the following year to 26. They say in their letter to the Association of this year, that they have been preserved from discord and measurably prospered. They sustain an interesting Bible Class and Sabbath School and are endeavoring to aid various objects of Christian benevolence. In 1856 they report four received by baptism and 31 as their total membership. This year was marked by the death of their pastor, Rev. John T. Mitchell. He died on the 29th of July, aged 55 years, missed and mourned by a large circle of relatives and acquaintances. "His daily walk as a Christian," says one who knew him personally, "was such as to secure the confidence of his neighbors and affectionate regard of the people of God. As a minister of Christ, he was faithful. His preaching was not with enticing words, but in demonstration of the Spirit. As a pastor he endeavored to watch over and feed the people of his charge. In his last sickness,

though suffering at intervals severe pain, yet his mind was fixed on the immutable promises of God."

The church, thus deprived of the presence and preaching of their pastor, were, however, regularly supplied by Mr. J. S. Dodge. They report to the Association in 1857, thirty-one as their total membership. In October of that year Rev. Newell Callender accepted the pastoral charge of the church. Under his faithful labors the cause was greatly revived. He was aided in a series of meetings by Rev. E. A. Francis, which resulted in the hopeful conversion of a large number of the impenitent. Forty-nine were baptized on a profession of faith and admitted to membership in the church. Thus seed, long since sown in faith and watered with tears, has finally sprung up and yielded an abundant harvest.

MOUNT BETHEL CHURCH.

This church is located in the western portion of Scott, Luzerne county, Pennsylvania, in the Olmstead neighborhood. Among the earlier inhabitants, were some three or four persons belonging to the Abington Church. Messrs. Abijah Dann and Benjamin Miller occasionally visited the neighborhood and held prayer and conference meetings in the "Olmstead School House." Few changes of especial interest occurred in the place until the Winter of 1849 and '50, when a precious revival was enjoyed under the labors of Messrs. Benjamin Miller and Charles Parker, and a comparatively large number of persons living in the settlement were baptized and received as members of the Abington Church. The work commenced with the Methodists and Six Principle Baptists, at Clark's Green, and continued to spread until it reached this neighborhood, and resulted in a general revival.

In the Summer of 1852 the brethren and sisters living in the Olmstead settlement were set off as a branch of the Abington Church, with the privilege of holding covenant meetings and transacting all necessary business subject to the inspection and approval of the parent church. In the Autumn of that year, a second revival was enjoyed in the settlement under the labors of Messrs. Parker and Benjamin Miller who were now licentiates of the Abington Church, not so extensive, however, as the former, yet resulting in much good to the cause and community. A number of the recent converts were baptized by Rev. John Miller, of Abington, and received as members of this branch.

It was now thought best to organize as an independent church. Accordingly a council of recognition, composed of delegates from neighboring churches, was convened June 15th, 1853, in the "Olmstead School House," when fifty brethren and sisters presented themselves with letters of dismission from the Abington Church and received fellowship as the "Mt. Bethel Baptist Church." When they united with the Association in the following Autumn, they report one received by letter and 51 as their total membership.

Messrs. Parker and Benjamin Miller continued to supply this infant church with general acceptance. No especial changes, however, marked its course or marred its history until the year 1855, when Mr. Charles Parker was ordained as pastor of the church by a council of brethren convened for that purpose. He has continued to serve the cause in that relation until the present time. Under his labors the church has received some accessions to its membership by baptism, and continued to enjoy comparative peace and prosperity. A Sabbath School has been sustained in the neighborhood since the Spring of 1854, during the Summer seasons, exerting, it is hoped, a happy influence on the rising generation. Other benevolent objects of Christian effort, have, however, received but little aid or attention, partly, it is presumed, on account of the youth and inexperience of most of the members. They say in their letter to the Association in 1856, that they cannot report that degree of prosperity and progress they could desire, yet the tenderness manifested in their meetings, and interest in the services, encourage them to hope that divine influences

have not been entirely withdrawn. They also report in their letter to the Association in 1857, fifty-three as their total membership and say that their present condition is not very encouraging and they would cry; "Oh that we knew where we might find Him, that we might come even to His seat." Such has been the brief and uniform course of this infant church.

HOLLISTERVILLE CHURCH.

Rev. Newell Callender, of Blakely, visited Hollisterville, Wayne county, Pennsylvania, January 1st, 1854, and preached on the evening of that day to a small audience convened in the school house. He came again on the 20th of the same month and commenced a series of meetings in the Protestant Methodist meeting house procured for that purpose. He picked his fuel and purchased his candles to warm and light the house. There was no one sufficiently interested to stand by him and stay up his hands, no Baptists living in the village except two sisters. He, however, was not entirely discouraged, but continued to pray and preach, and also to visit from house to house, conversing with such as he chance to meet at their fire-sides or in their daily business. The fire soon began to burn and the ice to melt. During his absence on a visit to his home, some three or four persons turned out with a team and procured a quantity of wood; candles were also provided, and on his return the house was well warmed and lighted without further difficulty. After the meetings were resumed, the house was soon filled with attentive listeners who flocked in from all quarters. Rev. O. L. Hall, of Blakely, now came to the aid of Mr. Callender, and ministers of other denominations occasionally attended the meetings and took part in the exercises. The opposition at first manifested, began to subside, and sinners to inquire "what shall I do to be saved?" The work thus commenced, continued to increase in power and extent, reaching in its progress almost all classes and conditions from early youth to hoary age,

heads of families and some whole households. It is estimated that not less than one hundred persons were hopefully converted in the vicinity during the meetings. On the 12th of February, Mr. Hall baptized five on a profession of faith; these with seven other baptized believers residing in the vicinity, organized as an independent church and were recognized as such, March 1st, 1854, by a council convened for that purpose. The services were of a deeply interesting character. On the morning of the following day six young men, some of them heads of families, related their experience before the church and were "buried with Christ in baptism."

Rev. O. L. Hall was immediately chosen pastor of this promising church and entered on the duties of that relation in April following. His labors were greatly blessed and valuable accessions were made to the church. Mr. Charles E. Hall was appointed clerk of the church, and Messrs. James Waite and William Potter were chosen Deacons. When the church united with the Association in the Autumn of 1854, they report twenty-eight received by baptism and 46 as their total membership—nearly quadrupling their numbers since their recognition. They also say in their letter that "they enjoy stated preaching and sustain a Bible Class, and three weekly prayer meetings. Their congregations are large and prospects bright. They have commenced building a convenient house of worship which they hope to complete in a few months." Through the efforts of the pastor and liberality of the members and sympathizing friends, their meeting house was finished at a cost of about \$1800, and dedicated to

the worship of God on the 6th of June, 1855, with appropriate religious services.

The Association met with them in the Autumn of that year and was hospitably entertained. The meetings were well attended and diffused a healthful and happy influence. During the session Messrs. Waite and Potter were ordained as Deacons of the church. The occasion was one of much interest. Early in the following Spring, a Sabbath School was organized with about forty scholars and teachers. The prospects of the school were encouraging.

The church say in their letter to the Association in 1856, that no especial changes have marked their course during the year; Sabbath services are statedly held with increasing interest; prejudice has yielded to the power of truth, and opposition to the influence of kindness. They sustain two weekly prayer meetings, a Bible Class and Sabbath School. At times clouds and darkness have gathered round but have soon broken and dispersed.

They report to the Association in 1857, 40 as their total membership. In October following their pastor, Rev. O. L. Hall, resigned his charge, retired from the field, and removed beyond the bounds of the Association. The church continued to sustain stated worship and to enjoy occasional preaching. They are anxious to settle a faithful and efficient pastor. There are few fields that have been more productive and prosperous.

SALEM CHURCH.

This church is located in Salem, Wayne county, Pennsylvania, at the "Jones Settlement." The place takes its name from Mr. Asa Jones, one of the pioneer settlers. He emigrated from Connecticut, and settled with his family at this place in the Spring of 1803. He and his wife were both Baptists and became members of the Palmyra Church, of which he was subsequently elected a Deacon, and continued to serve the cause with general acceptance in that capacity until his decease. His fervor and faithfulness are still held in affectionate and grateful remembrance. Though living some seven miles from the usual place of meeting, yet he was punctual in his attendance on the public and private gatherings of the church. It is related that he was accustomed to come and return through the dense and dangerous forest on foot, and frequently alone protected by his faithful dog and trusty rifle.

Rev. Wm. Purdy, of Palmyra, was accustomed to preach occasionally at "Jones Settlement." Under his labors a number of persons made a public profession of religion and united with the church of which he was long the esteemed pastor. Subsequent pastors of the Palmyra Church preached occasionally at the "Jones Settlement," and baptized a few converts. Thus matters continued in the settlement during a half century. In the Spring of 1853, Rev. Sanford Leach, pastor of Palmyra and other churches, visited "Jones Settlement," and commenced preaching alternately at this place and at "Sand Pond" as a regular supply. In the following Winter he held a series of meetings of

about three weeks, at these stations, resulting in great and lasting good to the cause and community. Backsliders were reclaimed and sinners converted, a number of whom were baptized on a profession of faith and admitted as members of Palmyra Church. The brethren and sisters residing in "Jones Settlement" and vicinity, having taken letters of dismission from the church of which they were members, held a meeting at the house of Mr. Joel Jones, March 5th, 1854, and organized as an independent church with the usual Articles of Faith and Covenant. A council of recognition was convened in the "Stone School House" on the 14th of the same month, Rev. Zelotes Grenell acting as moderator, and Rev. J. R. Ross as clerk. Nineteen brethren and sisters presented themselves and received fellowship as the Salem Baptist Church. "The exercises," according to the record, "were conducted in a manner worthy of the occasion."

The church united with the Association in the following Autumn, when they report two added by baptism and say their covenant meetings are interesting and usually well attended. They are about to secure the services of Rev. Orange L. Hall as a supply. They also say in their letter to the Association in 1855, that they mourn their want of zeal in the Master's cause, but are not entirely discouraged. They enjoy the labors of Mr. Hall one-half of the time; their congregations are comparatively large and attentive. They have done something for various objects of Christian benevolence and have it in their hearts to do more. In 1856, they report a similar state of things and add that they "are united, and sustain a prayer meeting." About

this time they were left without stated preaching, but continued to sustain public worship on the Sabbath. They report to the Association in 1857, 21 as their total membership, and say in their letter that no especial change has marked their course. They are still few and feeble, but not entirely faithless or faltering. Their prayer and covenant meetings are usually well attended.

ALDENVILLE CHURCH.

For a number of years previous to the constitution of this church, Aldenville, Wayne county, Pennsylvania, had been occupied as an out-station by the pastors of Bethany, Clinton and Honesdale churches. The labors, however, of Rev. Henry Curtis, who lived in the vicinity, were most abundant and protracted. A Sabbath School had, also, been established in the place and sustained most of the time. There were a number of Baptists, members of the above churches, residing in the village and vicinity, but deprived of the salutary influence of church organization, they were comparatively weak and had become nearly disheartened. Prayer meetings were sometimes commenced, but after a brief existence, were invariably terminated by cruel neglect. The spiritual wants of a rapidly increasing population were but partially supplied.

On the 1st of January, 1855, Rev. Newell Callender, pastor of Palmyra Church, visited the place by request and commenced a series of meetings, in connection with the pastor of Clinton Church. The presence and power of the Holy Spirit, were soon apparent. The members were aroused and revived, and a number of the impenitent were convinced of sin and hopefully converted to the Saviour. It was not long before some of the converts made a public profession of religion by submitting to the ordinance of baptism, most of whom united with the Clinton Church.

In the Spring of that year it was deemed advisable by a majority of the members residing in the place, to organize as an independent church. Accordingly a

council of recognition was convened in the school house at Aldenville, March 1st, 1855, Rev. Zelotes Grenell acting as moderator and E. L. Bailey as clerk. Sixteen brethren and sisters presented themselves with their letters, Articles of Faith and Covenant, and received fellowship as the "Regular Baptist Church of Aldenville," by appropriate and impressive religious services.

The pastoral labors of Mr. Callender were secured for one-half of the time, commencing in April of that year. When the church united with the Association in the following Autumn, they report 13 received by baptism and 31 as their total membership, and say in their letter that they have been deprived of the labors of their pastor during the past Summer by protracted sickness, and mourn the loss of a worthy sister by death. They have sustained two weekly prayer meetings, and commenced building a house of worship, thirty by forty-two feet; the frame is up and will probably be enclosed, and the house completed the present year.

In February, 1856, Mr. Callender resigned his charge of the church and retired from the field. He was succeeded by Rev. Henry Curtis, as pastor of the church. Their house of worship, located on a pleasant site donated by Mr. L. H. Alden, was completed and dedicated to the worship of God on the 9th of July of that year by appropriate religious service. Through the enterprise of Mr. H. P. Haight and others, it has since been furnished with a suitable bell. The house erected at a cost of about \$1500, is a tasty and substantial structure—a monument to the zeal and liberality of the members and community.

Mr. Curtis closed his stated labors with the church in January, 1857, being disabled by a sad and serious affliction. During the few subsequent months, the church was supplied occasionally by Mr. B. B. Bunting, who had previously been licensed to preach the Gospel. In the following April, the services of Mr. D. W. Halsted were secured as a supply; he was ordained as pastor of the church on the 23d of July following. They report to the Association in the Fall of 1857, twenty-nine as their total membership, and say that they enjoy a good degree of union and harmony. They maintain a weekly prayer meeting and hope soon to hear sinners inquiring what they shall do to be saved.

ABINGTON VALLEY CHURCH.

A large proportion of the early population of Abington, entertained Baptist principles. These principles have assumed various forms at different times and places. The Regular Baptists, however, have uniformly been the most numerous and influential. The Old School flourished for a season and the Free Will have been at times quite numerous; the Seven Day have also had some adherents, and the Six Principle have been comparatively prosperous. A church of the last named order was organized at an early day at Bailey Hollow, in Abington, Luzerne county, where they have a convenient "Bethel" and hold stated meetings for religious worship. A majority of the members in this church, were furious for moderation. They were opposed to Missionary efforts, Bible Societies, Sabbath Schools, Choir Singing, and most of the reformatory measures and movements of the present day. The minority in this church holding other views, frequently attempted to overcome this opposition and initiate social and religious reforms, but were as frequently frustrated in their plans and foiled in their purposes. At length, becoming wearied and wasted, they retired from the unequal conflict and resolved to establish an independent interest on more rational views and progressive principles. Accordingly a meeting was held to deliberate on their present condition and decide on their future course. They deliberated with much care and decided with great caution. The meeting was adjourned from time to time in order to give sufficient opportunity for deliberate consideration. They finally

concluded to organize as a Regular Baptist church and call a council of recognition. At their invitation a council of brethren from First Abington, West Abington, Benton, Blakely, Clinton, Greenfield, Newton and Mt. Bethel churches, was convened at Bailey Hollow, on the 28th of February, 1856. Rev. Henry Curtis officiated as moderator, and Rev. J. B. Kenyon acted as clerk of the council. Twenty-three persons, twelve males and eleven females having presented themselves and submitted their Articles of Faith and church Covenant, were recognized by the council as the Abington Valley Church by the following order of religious services, viz., Rev. Wm. K. Mott preached a sermon from Eph. 4: 15, 16; Rev. Wm. A. Miller extended the hand of fellowship; Rev. John Miller addressed the church, and Rev. Benjamin Miller offered the concluding prayer. The entire exercises were of an interesting character.

The church was supplied with stated preaching for some months after its recognition by Mr. Mott, pastor of the Hyde Park Church. His labors were of essential service to this young but promising interest. The church was now left without a stated supply, but was encouraged from time to time by the presence and preaching of neighboring ministers. The church was admitted into the Association in the following Autumn, with its membership unchanged and harmony unimpaired. They were then anxious to secure the pastoral services of a minister who would faithfully preach the Gospel and fearlessly rebuke sin in all its forms. But they did not succeed in settling a pastor. The services, however, of Rev. Charles Parker, were en-

gaged as a stated supply. Monthly covenant meetings were regularly held and communion seasons enjoyed. The services of Mr. Parker were continued until the annual meeting of the Association in the Autumn of 1857, when they report 22 as their total membership, and also say in their letter that they have engaged the services of Rev. T. J. Cole as the first pastor of the church, and expect him to enter on the duties of the office about the first of October following—his labors to be shared with the Benton Church.

The church have a convenient house of worship. Most of the members being stockholders in the Bethel meeting house in Bailey Hollow, owned and occupied a portion of the time by the Six Principle Baptists, endeavored to get the privilege of holding occasional meetings in it when unoccupied, but not finding it "agreeable" to do so, they ceased their solicitations and concluded to make an effort to build a house of their own. At a meeting held September 18th, 1856, they decided to build, and appointed a committee to solicit material aid. A suitable lot was generously donated by a gentleman living in the place, but not a professor of religion, and a sufficient amount was pledged within a month to build a plain but convenient house of worship. No other mechanic being willing to build the house for the sum offered, Dea. H. J. Colvin took the contract for the amount subscribed. He carried forward the work during the inclemency of the following Winter, with his characteristic industry and perseverance. In the meantime the ladies of the church and congregation, organized a Sewing Circle which met weekly for the purpose of raising means to furnish the

house when completed. A bell was procured, the house finished, furnished and dedicated, April 30th, 1857, with suitable services. It is 36 by 50 feet on the ground, erected at a cost of \$1600, and pleasantly situated in a delightful valley.

PRESTON CENTRE CHURCH.

A few members of the Scott Church were living in Preston, Wayne county, Pennsylvania, at some distance from the more central place of holding meetings. They had for some years acted as a branch of that church and enjoyed the ordinances of the Supper and baptism at their place and pleasure.

They, however, on account of their isolated position, finally decided to organize as a "distinct church." Accordingly a council of brethren from neighboring churches in the Abington and Bridgewater Associations, was convened at Preston Centre, April 14th, 1858, to render advice and give them fellowship as a Gospel church. Twenty brethren and sisters presented themselves to the council and were duly recognized as "the Preston Centre Baptist Church."

When this church was admitted into the Association in the following Autumn, they reported four additions and 24 communicants. They also say in their letter, "We have secured the pastoral services of Rev. Rial Tower, one-fourth of the time, and we are trying to maintain the worship of God among us. The faithful labors of Mr. Tower have been graciously owned and greatly blessed. We have a large Sabbath School and ample library.

Mr. Tower continued to labor for them a portion of the time, during the two following years. In the Fall of 1859, they reported to the Association two baptisms and 26 communicants. They had licensed Mr. Samuel W. Lloyd to exercise his gift in preaching and had also passed through some severe trials. They, however,

were not disheartened, but hoped for brighter and better days. In 1860, they complained of discord and coldness. Nor was there much improvement during 1861, but the same state of things continued causing them to lament their condition and long for a return of Christian love and revival influences. Mr. William N., son of Rev. Rial Tower, and licentiate of the Lenox Church, now supplied them, dividing his time between this and the Scott Church. In 1862, Mr. Tower was still preaching for these two churches, now as an ordained minister. At the recent meeting of the Association held at Bethany, they report 23 communicants, and say in their letter, "We have had no preaching for the past year. Our covenant meetings are poorly attended. We have tried to sustain a Sabbath prayer meeting and have a small Sunday School on the union plan. We have secured for the coming year the labors of Rev. E. C. Cook each alternate Sabbath."

BARRYVILLE AND SHOHOLA CHURCH.

The name, perhaps, of this church, will sufficiently indicate its location. It may, however, be added that Barryville and Shohola are situated some miles east of the Delaware river in Sullivan county, N. Y. The church at this place was gathered and organized under the zealous labors of Rev. E. A. Francis, whose efforts have been attended with much success in various portions of this Association. He held a series of meetings at Barryville in the Winter of 1858-9, resulting in the hopeful conversion of many of the impenitent. The church in this place was recognized by appropriate religious services on the 7th of February, 1859, with 21 constituent members, five of whom had been baptized on the previous day, the remaining 16 bearing letters of commendation.

Thus the foundation of this church was laid but the work did not cease. The sound of the axe was heard in the forest and its echo on the hills. The walls were slowly rising and the building was gradually approaching completion. By the 10th of November following, Mr. Francis had baptized 39 persons on a profession of faith, into the fellowship of the church. Rev. James L. Bennett now accepted the pastoral charge and continued to aid on the work. When the church united with the Association in the Autumn of 1860, they reported 61 communicants. "Our course during the past year," they say in their letter, "has been gradually and graciously onward, occasional conversions and baptismal seasons cheering and encouraging our hearts. We have been enabled to complete a convenient and com-

modious meeting house which was dedicated to the worship of God on the 15th of March last."

The following year was marked by trials and declension. Some members had removed to distant places, and others neglected the stated meetings of the church. They were also afflicted by internal dissensions, and assailed by outward opposition arising from sectarian prejudice. The pastor, however, continued to labor with uniform earnestness and faithfulness until the following Spring, when he resigned his charge and retired from the field. In May, 1861, Rev. C. A. Skinner became pastor of the church and labored with marked zeal and success. Under his judicious efforts the Sabbath School was re-organized, the congregations were increased and unity of feeling and action was restored in the church. They reported to the Association in the Fall of this year, six baptisms and 71 communicants.

In 1862, Mr. Bennett is again reported as pastor of the church, dividing his time perhaps between this and the Ten Mile River Church. They reported in the Autumn of this year 63 as their total membership. At the recent Anniversary of the Association, held at Bethany, they report six baptisms and 68 communicants, and say in their letter that "during the months of January and February last, we enjoyed the labors of Rev. E. A. Francis in a protracted effort, in connection with those of our then pastor, Rev. J. L. Bennett, resulting in the addition of six to us by baptism. Rev. James R. Remsen is our present pastor."

SCRANTON CHURCH.

The public recognition of this church took place in the Odd Fellows' Hall, August 24th, 1859. The council convened upon the occasion was composed of ministers and messengers from different churches in the Association. The following brethren officiated in the public exercises of recognition, Revs. C. A. Fox, Thomas J. Cole, E. L. Bailey and L. O. Grenell. Rev. Isaac Bevan, Corresponding Secretary of the Pennsylvania Baptist Convention, was present by request of the church and preached the sermon. Twenty-five brethren and sisters had on the preceding week organized themselves into a church by unanimous resolution, and by adopting Articles of Faith and a church Covenant. Nearly all these brethren and sisters presented letters of dismission from the church in Hyde Park, of which Rev. Wm. K. Mott was pastor.

Some brethren who had been deeply interested in the advancement of the cause of Christ in our own denomination had felt anxious for several years that such a movement should be made in Scranton. The Welsh brethren had organized as a church some years previous, and erected a house of worship. Under the labors of Rev. J. A. James they had enjoyed considerable prosperity. He had resigned and was succeeded by Rev. Theophilus Jones, who counseled and urged the American brethren to organize. Other brethren had also taken some pains to bring about the same desirable result.

After the church was organized, the Odd Fellows' Hall was rented for its exclusive use on the Sabbath.

A Sabbath School was successfully gathered, which has continued with considerable encouragement. Rev. Theophilus Jones preached for the church on Sabbath evenings for two months with much acceptance. He performed this labor in addition to preaching two sermons in Welsh every Sabbath.

With the advice of neighboring brethren in the ministry, the church gave Rev. Isaac Bevan a call to the pastorate. In doing this they expected to receive aid from the American Baptist Home Mission Society, to the amount of \$300 at least, as the Pennsylvania Baptist Convention could not at that time give them any assistance. The Board of the Home Mission Society, when the application came before them, felt compelled to decline an appropriation. This was after Mr. Bevan had settled with the church and been in the field two months. The church had agreed to pay him \$250 a year. When the decision of the Home Mission Board was received, the brethren, encouraged by the liberality of members of the congregation and some members of the Presbyterian church, at once agreed to pay their pastor \$500 a year, which they succeeded in doing. When the pastor settled with them November 1st, there were 23 members, two having taken letters and removed to another place. From that time to the present (October 15th, 1863,) the church has enjoyed uniform peace and a gratifying degree of prosperity. It has received by baptism 50, by experience eight, by letter 71, making with the original number 154. There have been dismissed by letter 23, dropped four, excluded three, died one, leaving 123 as their present total membership.

The first year the church received some aid from a few churches in the Association. With that exception it has been self-sustaining. For more than a year it occupied the Odd Fellows' Hall, and since that the Washington Hall. In the Winter and Spring of 1863 meetings were held every evening for nearly three months, which were greatly blessed to the reviving of the church and conversion of souls. As the fruit of these meetings a few backsliders were reclaimed, and 35 added by baptism. The pastor received valuable aid from Revs. C. A. Fox and D. W. Halsted. The great want of the church at present is a house of worship, which they hope soon to be able to build. The pastor and church have been happily united in all their labors, and especially so in regard to the state of the country during the present war. With scarcely a single exception they have been decidedly and devotedly loyal. Seven of the brethren entered the army; four of these have been honorably discharged after faithfully serving their country. Three are still in the service.

The following brethren are the esteemed Deacons of this church, viz., Messrs. Lewis Lewis, Nathaniel Halsted and Reuben A. Henry. The last two formerly occupied the same position in the Hyde Park Church.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES

OF THE PIONEER MINISTERS.

These pioneers have long since passed away, as we fondly hope, to their grateful rest and gracious reward, but not until they had aided in laying a firm foundation for a stately structure and setting in motion influences that must continue to extend and expand through all coming time. While they served their own generation by the will of God, they also suffered and sacrificed for the future good and growth of the cause and kingdom of Christ. They felled the forest and fallowed the field ; they stirred the soil and scattered the seed. It remains for us who have entered into their labors, to carry on the work they commenced, and prize and perpetuate the influence they exerted. It is ours still to plant and prune, to water and weed the growing crop, and gather and garner the golden harvest.

Their lot was cast in primitive times, possessing peculiar necessities and demanding corresponding qualifications. The country was newly settled and the population widely scattered. The people were generally simple in their social habits, and necessarily subject to serious privations and hardships. With little time for literary culture, they had less taste for mere glitter of

style or grace of composition. Nevertheless, they could appreciate rich truths clothed in rude language, preferring the Gospel in the rough, with its sharp angles and irregular sides, just as it was raised from the mine or rolled from the mountain. Their sensible wants and wishes were best met and supplied by a ministry from among themselves, self-schooled, self-supporting and self-sacrificing. It was enough that they possessed strong common sense and sound scriptural knowledge, delivering their message with fervor of feeling and fluency of speech; these were considered suitable qualifications for their responsible work among the pioneer population of this comparative wilderness.

They were, however, men of like passions with ourselves; doubtless, errors and excellences mingled in their creed, and beauties and blemishes blended in their character, yet it may be both pleasant and profitable for us who are launched on the same waves and are following in their widening wake, to reverently pause and rationally pass in review their eventful course, so full of stirring incident and salutary instruction. Though dead, they yet speak; a voice of caution and encouragement comes up from their lowly graves, scattered among these rugged hills and along these rich valleys; now raised in solemn warning against the fashionable follies and popular prejudices of the times; then again, it is heard clear and calm above the din and dust of the battle-field, in tones of earnest encouragement, arousing and rallying the scattered and scarred hosts of God's elect, to fearlessly renew the deadly conflict and fiercely rush to the dreadful carnage. We pause to catch the distant, yet distinct sound; to

ponder and profit by the various lessons of their valuable lives and labors.

The work on this field was begun and prosecuted chiefly by pious persons from among the pioneer population. The cause owes little to external pressure or appliances. However, some aid from abroad was graciously rendered and gratefully received. During the early portion of the present century, the Baptists of New England considered North-Eastern Pennsylvania as missionary ground, having some claim on their personal efforts and pecuniary assistance. Accordingly "The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society" was accustomed to employ itinerant missionaries and send them on occasional tours across the State of New York, into this distant and destitute field.

In the Spring of 1807, Rev. Peter P. Roots, a missionary of this Society, passed through North-Eastern Pennsylvania, entering the state at Great Bend on the Susquehanna, and leaving it at Milford on the Delaware. During his passage he preached at Nine Partners—now Harford—Clifford, Mt. Pleasant, Bethany, Cherry Ridge and Purdytown, near the Lackawa Settlement. In December, 1809, Rev. Jesse Hartwell and Rev. Asa Todd, also missionaries of this Society, after crossing the State of New York, penetrated this wilderness. They spent a few days at Bethany and Mt. Pleasant, "preaching," as the journal runs, "to a needy and scattered people."

In the Summer of 1811, Rev. John Lawton, a missionary of the "Baptist Missionary Convention of the State of New York," also visited this field and made a brief stay at Bethany, preaching twice in the court house of that place.

Other ministers from abroad occasionally passed through this wild region, visiting the various churches and settlements, to comfort the hearts and confirm the faith of these scattered disciples, but the brunt and burden of evangelizing this moral waste, were chiefly assumed and cheerfully borne by earnest brethren from among the early settlers.

Permit me, then, to direct your attention to the pious lives of these pioneer laborers. Let us gather around their silent dust and scatter fresh flowers on their solitary graves. While we charitably shroud their defects and carefully shun their derelictions, let us gratefully revive their many excellences and graciously emulate their energy and earnestness, their piety and perseverance.

THE PIONEER PREACHERS.

A number of these have already been incidently named in the preceding pages. It but remains to briefly notice the lives and labors of the three following who were among the more prominent and persevering.

REV. EPAPHRAS THOMPSON.

It will be impracticable to correctly trace the dawning life or declining years of the mysterious subject of this imperfect sketch. So far as we can learn, he was "without beginning of days and end of life." Bursting unexpectedly on our view like the comet, he delays and dazzles for a brief period, and then dashes off and disappears in the dim distance.

Epaphras Thompson was born, as is supposed, in the State of Connecticut, in about the year 1755. He was a silversmith by trade, but was soon called to quit the quiet of his chosen avocation and enter on more stirring scenes. He joined a company of Cavalry, under Col. Sheldon, and participated in the strife and struggle for national independence. At the conclusion of the revolutionary war in 1783, he was married to Miss Margaret Horner, and settled in Wethersfield, Hartford county, Connecticut, where he lived in a house recently the scene of an awful tragedy, indicating a mind devoid of groundless fear and superior to a prevalent superstition.*

* On the 11th of December, 1782, Mr. Wm. Beadle, of Wethersfield, knocked down his wife and six children with an axe, and cut their throats with a carving knife, and then blew out his own brains with a pistol. He entertained deistical opinions, and at the time of this awful tragedy was suffering from depression of mind occasioned by loss of property.

He next moved with his family to Bristol in the same county, where he settled as pastor of the Baptist church composed of members residing in the place and also at New Hartford.

In the Autumn of 1800, he visited the Beech Woods in Pennsylvania, and commenced preaching at Mt. Pleasant, Wayne county; in the following year he brought on his family and settled in the place. He was the first resident minister in the township of any denomination. The region was wild and mountainous; the population sparse and scattered. The traveling was also difficult and dangerous, and provisions scarce and costly. There was little in the condition or prospects of the place to invite to present service, or promise future success. He, however, entered the field and commenced preaching for the Free Communion Baptist Society, recently organized, with but six communicants. His labors were early blessed, and a number of the pioneers were hopefully converted. Not fully harmonizing with some of the leading members on the limitations of communion, after discussing the subject, a compromise was agreed upon and the church re-organized with 14 communicants, of which he became a member and the first pastor.

He now extended his ministerial labors to other and distant settlements, scattered over a wide range of this wilderness region. He frequently preached at Lackawa on the Wallenpaupack, Cochection on the Delaware, Pittston on the Susquehanna, Thornbottom on the Tunkhannock, also near the head waters of the Wyalusing, and at Elkwoods and Nine Partners in what is now Susquehanna county. His labors were greatly

blessed and large numbers were hopefully converted and admitted into the church; thus increasing its membership until with its branches it embraced upwards of 200 communicants. The church, however, having fallen back on unrestricted communion, Mr. Thompson and seven others withdrew and constituted a Regular Baptist church in the Autumn of 1807, and also united with others in organizing this Association. Mr. Thompson was moderator of the Convention held for the purpose of forming the Association and exerted his influence in giving it shape and character.

In the Spring of 1808, he took a letter of commendation and settled at Dundaff, Susquehanna county, and commenced preaching for a branch of "Elder Miller's church," in Elkwoods. The people, however, soon lost confidence in his moral character, he having been drawn into habits of intemperance and frequently seen in a state of intoxication. In the Summer of 1809, complaint was made of his conduct to the Mt. Pleasant Church, of which he was still a member, by the Abington Church, in the bounds of which he was then living. In the Fall of 1813, he was excluded from the church and published in the minutes of the Association, of 1819, as an imposter, and the churches were cautioned against his pretensions.

It is not certainly known that he was ever reclaimed from his wanderings or restored to membership in the church. There was, however, a floating report of his subsequent reformation, and an aged acquaintance of his, "hopes," from what of information he has received, "that his end was peace." He had moved from the vicinity, but to what place is not certainly known;

some say to Kingston in the Wyoming Valley; others, to Penn Yan in the State of New York.*

It is presumed that he and his wife have long since died and been "gathered to their fathers." They had eight children, five of whom were sons. Epaphras, the oldest son, became a minister of the Baptist church, and settled in Western New York; Manna, the second son, was for a time a preacher among the Episcopal Methodist, but subsequently of the Presbyterian denomination. The daughters are all dead, as is believed, and perhaps most or all of the sons.

Mr. Thompson was a man of respectable talents and attainments: somewhat proud and ostentatious; of commanding appearance and commendable address.

"Unknown he came; he went a mystery—
A stately vessel foundered in a calm."

REV. SAMUEL STURDEVANT.

The life of the subject of this sketch was remarkably uniform and his labors were extensively useful. He pursued the even tenor of his way and work amid many cares and crosses.

Samuel Sturdevant, born as is believed, in Danbury, Fairfield county, Connecticut, August 30th, 1741, was the child of pious parents belonging to the Congregationalists. He early made a public profession of reli-

* When remonstrated with, by Rev. Elnathan Baker, for his dissipation, he would reply, "I have greatly wandered and I am singing a different tune from what I formerly did, but I have not lost the *mi* on the gamut—my feelings are still tender."

It is related that he began to reform, while at Kingston, and after removing to Penn Yan, resumed preaching, and finally died at or near that place. It is remarkable that any of the pioneer ministers escaped intemperate habits, considering the state of public sentiment and practice at that time as to the sale and use of intoxicating drinks.

gion and joined the society of which his parents were esteemed members. His attention, however, being subsequently directed to the mode and subjects of Baptism, by reading 1 Cor. 15: 29, he was led to give the subject a thorough examination, which resulted in breaking up his early prejudices and leading him to adopt the distinctive principles of the Baptists. At the sacrifice of personal feelings and perhaps friends, he followed his honest convictions and united with the Baptist church.

In his youthful years he was married to Miss Ruth Northrop, of his native place, by whom he subsequently had eight children, two sons and six daughters. A few years later, at the call of duty and danger, leaving the quiet of domestic life and agricultural labor, he entered the army of the revolution and continued in the service until the conclusion of the war. Returning to the bosom of his family and resuming the peaceful pursuits of the farm, he shared the blessings of liberty, and enjoyed the privileges of free government, which he had aided in securing for himself and his country. But every position and pursuit has its difficulties and disappointments. His wife soon sickened and died, leaving him with a large family of young children to watch over and provide for.

In about 1790, he married Miss Sarah Morris and moved with his wife and all his children except one daughter, into Pennsylvania, and settled on the Susquehanna at *Blackwalnutbottom, in what is now Brain-

*"The land is exceedingly fine and rich, the soil very black and timbered chiefly with black walnut, which are remarkably large, some not less than six feet over, and exceedingly high. It is likewise well calculated for making fine and extensive meadows."—*Journal of Colonel Adam Hubley, 1779.*

trim, Wyoming county. His second wife, however, died soon after his settlement in this wild region. He was subsequently married to Mrs. Lucy Cooley, a widow with five children. By her he had three children, two sons and a daughter. All his children are now dead, except Elijah, his elder son by his last wife, and Mrs. Joseph Smith, living in Windham, on the opposite side of the river from the old homestead.

Mr. Sturdevant found the region but sparsely settled, and the people comparatively destitute of religious privileges. The Sabbath was principally occupied in fishing, hunting, and other rude recreations, while religious meetings were seldom held and but thinly attended. To provide for the temporal wants of himself and numerous family, required most of his time and attention, yet the spiritual destitution of the scattered population, constrained him to sacrifice his pecuniary interests and personal ease, to preach the "glorious Gospel." He accordingly commenced preaching at once in the immediate vicinity, and soon extended his labors to adjacent settlements, scattered up and down the Susquehanna river and along the Wyalusing and Tunkhannock creeks. He preached statedly at Blackwalnutbottom, Thornbottom, and Tunkhannock, and also occasionally at various other settlements more distant, and, if possible, more destitute. When attending an appointment at Thornbottom on the Tunkhannock, he was called to preach a funeral sermon in Abington—the first sermon, it is believed, ever preached in that township. Thus providentially introduced, he frequently visited the place and preached for the few Baptists who had recently settled in that wilderness.

Mr. Sturdevant commenced "exercising his gift" while in Connecticut, but was not "set apart" to the ministry until after his settlement in Pennsylvania. Under his faithful labors the Usher Baptist Church was gathered and organized at Blackwalnutbottom. He was soon after ordained as pastor of this church by Rev. David Jayne, then living at Thornbottom on the Tunkhannock. He was also present as a delegate from this church, at the recognition of Abington Church and ordination of Mr. John Miller, in the Autumn of 1802, and participated in the public services on that occasion. He offered the ordination prayer, and baptized six of the constituent members of the church. He was also present at the organization of this Association, in 1807, and, by invitation, took a seat in the convention and part in its deliberations.

The church at Blackwalnutbottom, of which he was a constituent member and the only pastor, having disbanded, he united on "recommend," and his wife Lucy, on "experience," with the Abington Church, perhaps in 1809. They remained esteemed members of this church until the 28th of June, 1816, when they took letters of dismission and became constituent members of the Braintrim Church, organized of the scattered members of the late Usher Church and recent converts, near his home in Blackwalnutbottom.

Mr. Sturdevant continued to preach statedly until the year 1824, when the infirmities of age and impaired health admonished him to retire from the public labors of the ministry. He still continued, however, to recommend the Saviour and his cause by a consis-

tent conduct and godly conversation. In the Fall of 1827, while in feeble health, he called on most of the families living within four or five miles of his home, and conversed with them on the "great salvation." These were his last visits. He now returned to his family, where he remained until his decease. His health continued to decline and his strength to fail. His mind, however, was calm and resigned. The 17th Psalm was a source of great comfort to him during his last sickness, which terminated in his death, April 9th, 1828, at the advanced age of 86 years. His funeral discourse was preached by Rev. Davis Dimock, of Montrose, from Rev. 14: 13, to a large circle of mourning relatives and sympathizing neighbors. He was buried in the grave-yard on his own farm. A plain marble slab marks the place of his rest and bears an appropriate inscription.

Mr. Sturdevant was a man of devoted piety and uniform faithfulness. His literary attainments and general reading were comparatively limited, yet he was a diligent student of the sacred Scriptures, and delighted to "draw living water from this pure fountain." Like most of the pioneer ministers, he preached without a stipulated salary, sustaining himself and numerous family by his daily toil on his own farm. His ministry was measurably blessed. Many persons were brought to a saving knowledge of the truth under his faithful labors, and a number attribute their first serious impressions to the influence of his farewell visits. Most of his own children early became pious and united with the Baptist church. His only surviving son, Rev. Elijah Sturdevant, is a faithful minister of the Baptist

denomination. His numerous grand-children are mostly members of Baptist churches; perhaps not less than one hundred in all. Four of his grand-sons are ministers of the Gospel, viz: Revs. Isaac B. Lake, Ira J. Sturdevant, Harvey H. and Davis D. Gray. The last named was, for a time, the esteemed pastor of the Honesdale Church, and is still affectionately remembered by many who enjoyed his faithful labors.

Few of the pioneer ministers of this region, exerted a more lovely and lasting influence than the subject of this sketch; especially in the daily intercourse of domestic life, where the real character is most apparent and best appreciated. In this relation his religious influence was most happy, forming the opinions and moulding the characters, not only of his own children, but also extending and expanding over other generations of his numerous posterity.

REV. WILLIAM BISHOP.

The early life and earnest labors of the subject of this sketch are involved in much obscurity. Neither the records of churches, nor recollections of cotemporaries, afford sufficient materials for a connected account of his erratic course or interesting career. Such facts in fragments, however, as could be gleaned from reliable sources, have been carefully garnered.

William Bishop was born in England, in 1749 or '50, where he married a wife, by whom he had two sons. The early death of his companion was the means of his hopeful conversion. Though sad and serious, yet he subsequently consented to a second marriage. Elizabeth, his second wife, excelled rather in grace of mind

and manners, than in that of form or features. He saw her for the first time on the day of their marriage, the "match" having been made by their parents. The aversion occasioned at first by her uncomely countenance, was however soon lost in her fascinating conversation and amiable deportment. They lived together in great harmony and happiness.

Having been ordained to the ministry in his native land, he now, in the meridian of life, emigrated with his family to America, and settled, as is supposed, in 1794, at "Capouse Meadows," in the Lackawanna Valley, Luzerne county, Pennsylvania. His humble dwelling, built of hewn logs and surrounded by a small clearing, stood on the spot occupied by the present residence of Mr. William Merrifield, of Hyde Park; and the "parsonage lot," containing some three hundred acres, and extending across the Lackawanna river, embraced most of the present site of Scranton borough.

The Lackawanna Valley, at this early period, was but sparsely populated; its hidden wealth was not yet developed, or even discovered; at various points, however, openings were made and settlements commenced. The pioneer population, chiefly from New England, were as various in their religious opinions as they were versatile and vigorous in their secular pursuits.

Mr. Bishop was the first resident minister in this valley and among this people, of any sect or denomination. He seems to have been admirably adapted to the anomalous position he providentially occupied. Of amiable mind and affable manners, he was a general favorite with the people of all classes and conditions.

The field of his ministerial labors, extended along

the Lackawanna and Wyoming valleys, from Blakely to Wilkesbarre, a distance of some twenty-five miles. At Pittston, situated at the connection of these valleys and confluence of the Lackawanna and Susquehanna rivers, a Baptist church gathered, as is supposed, under the labors of Revs. Eleazer West, of Wyoming Valley, and James Benedict, of Warwick, N. Y., had been constituted in the Fall of 1786, and admitted into the Philadelphia Association in the Autumn of the following year, with 32 members, then under the pastoral care of *Rev. James Finn, recently from Wantage, N. J.; in 1792 it embraced 134 communicants.

Mr. Bishop became pastor of this church, as is believed, in 1794, and continued to sustain this relation during some ten years. In the Spring of 1806, this church, "formerly under the care of Mr. Bishop," disbanded, and fourteen of the remaining members became a branch of Abington Church.

In addition to his regular appointments at Pittston, Mr. Bishop was accustomed to preach occasionally at what is now Blakely, Providence, Hyde Park, Lackawanna, Jacob's Plains, and Wilkesbarre, and also at

* Rev. James Finn was born, as is believed, at Goshen, New York, shortly previous to the middle of the last century, and at an early age was married to Miss Hannah Carr, perhaps of his native place. He moved into New Jersey and was ordained, April 23, 1783, as pastor of the Baptist church of Wantage, in that State, where he remained for some two years and then removed to Pittston, Pennsylvania. He became the first pastor of the Baptist church in that place, a relation he sustained during some six or seven years. He is next found living at Thornbottom on the Tunkhannock, where he died and his remains now repose. His widow married Captain Daniel Gore, of "Jacob's Plains," in the Wyoming Valley. She survived her second husband and finally died at the house of her son, William Finn, in Clifford, Susquehanna county, March 16, 1835, aged 85 years and 11 months. The descendants of Mr. Finn and his wife are quite numerous in this region, many of whom are following in the steps of their venerable ancestors.

various other places within and beyond the limits of these valleys, in log huts, barns and school houses, as were most central and convenient. Accompanied by his wife, he would set out on horseback for the place a few days previous to the time of his appointment, and on arriving, put up with some respectable family in the immediate vicinity. He did not waste his time in social ease or selfish gratifications, but would visit during most of each day, from house to house, through the neighborhood, conversing with such as he chanced to meet at their homes or by the way, both old and young, on religious and other rational subjects. When the time appointed for preaching arrived, the place of meeting would be thronged by persons of various sects and creeds, seemingly eager to listen to his solemn and searching discourses. On the following day he would hasten, with his wife, to the place of his next appointment, and thus continue from day to day and week to week, traveling and preaching; warning the careless, instructing the ignorant and encouraging the doubting and desponding. His visits were uniformly welcome, his conversation agreeable, and his sermons instructive and entertaining. He also took a prominent part in the constitution of the early churches and ordination of the pioneer pastors of this isolated region. He was present at the recognition of the church at Palmyra and ordination of William Purdy, in the Fall of 1801: and, also, at the recognition of the church at Abington and ordination of John Miller, in the Autumn of 1802, and took an active part in the private counsels and a leading position in the public services. In the Fall of 1803, at the request of the people of

"Jacob's Plains," in the Wyoming Valley, he wrote to the church of Abington, soliciting the appointment of their pastor and other brethren to sit in council at the house of Capt. Daniel Gore, "to see if it be eligible to constitute a church and ordain Stephen Bishop as an Elder." Rev. William Purdy, of "Lackawa," was also expected to be present to participate in the duties and deliberations of the proposed meeting. There is, however, little, if any, reason to conclude that it was found "eligible" to constitute a church or ordain an "Elder" at the appointed time and place.

At this date, Mr. Bishop disappears from the stage; no trace of his presence or preaching in this region is found from the Autumn of 1803 until that of 1811, a period of eight years, excepting once, in the Fall of 1809, when he was at Pittston, perhaps on a visit, and preached at the house of Mr. Nathaniel Giddings. During this time the church at Pittston was disbanded; that at Mt. Pleasant recognized; the Abington Association organized, and Deacons of Abington Church were ordained; but no evidence is found that he was present to participate in the interesting services of these rare occasions.

It is believed that he was living in New Jersey during a part or all of this interim, and laboring as the esteemed pastor of Howe Baptist Church, near Freehold. However, after this long absence, he again appears in the vicinity of his former labors, and settles with his family in "Brown Hollow," in what is now Scott, Luzerne county, Pennsylvania. He was present, for the first time, at an anniversary of this Association, in the Autumn of 1811, "from Philadelphia Associa-

tion," and preached on the second day of the session. In the Fall of 1812, he and his wife Elizabeth, united on a letter from the Howe Church, with the branch of Abington Church at Pittston.

He now resumed his ministerial labors, traveling and preaching in the field of his former efforts. He attended the anniversaries of this Association in 1812, '13, '14 and '15, preaching at different times and officiating as moderator in 1813 and '15.

His wife died, as is believed, in the Winter of 1812 and '13. His son Henry, previously married, subsequently moved from the vicinity; the other son, William, died and was buried in Greenfield.

In 1814, Mr. Bishop was united in marriage to Mrs. Morse, of Clifford. Not having learned to woo in early life, he was somewhat peculiar in such matters in his declining years. It is related that he secured his third wife in the following manner. Coming to the log-cabin of Mrs. Morse, he stooped in at the low door and immediately made known the object of his unexpected visit. Without waiting for an answer, he said, "Come, let us inquire of the Lord; he will tell us what is best." He then dropped on his knees and offered a pertinent prayer for Divine direction. Mrs. Morse, being a pious widow, said in fact if not in form, "The will of the Lord be done."

The union thus formed was, however, of but short duration. Mr. Bishop died, March 22d, 1816, in the 67th year of his age, loved and lamented by numerous brethren and friends. Rev. John Miller, of Abington, preached his funeral sermon, and, as was his custom, gave an outline of his life and labors. He was buried

in what is now Scott, on the farm owned and occupied at the time by Capt. James Brown, over the way from the principal burying-ground, near the present residence of Mr. Stephen Vosburgh. A slab of brown stone marks the place of his rest, and bears a brief but appropriate inscription. Two wild cherries cast their morning shadows and Autumnal leaves on his lonely grave.

Thus lived, labored and died one of the pioneer preachers of this Association, and the first resident minister of Lackawanna Valley.

It is said, by those who were personally acquainted with Mr. Bishop, that he was of medium stature and manly presence; agreeable in conversation and gentlemanly in his manners and intercourse. His native talents were rare and literary attainment respectable, though not liberal. He was not fluent of speech or flowery in style, yet his discourses, often extending through some two hours, according to the custom of the times, were replete with sound views and salutary instruction, and uniformly elicited a fixed attention and left a favorable impression. His opinion was frequently consulted and advice sought on doubtful or difficult questions. He maintained to the last an unblemished reputation as a man and minister, for "deep piety and strong integrity." Such is the testimony of one who knows whereof he affirms. He closed his eventful life, surrounded by numerous friends and sustained by an unwavering faith and confident hope. Nearly the last words that lingered on his dying lips, were "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day."

THE PIONEER PASTORS.

The following were the original pastors of the three constituent churches of the Association. There was a marked similarity in the leading events of their active and interesting lives. The three were born in Connecticut, and ordained in Pennsylvania; they were also constituent members of the respective churches over which they presided for so many years with so much faithfulness. They lived in the same region and labored side by side, aiding and sympathizing with each other in their toils and successes. Their remains await the resurrection on their respective fields of pastoral labor, while their ransomed spirits, as we trust, hold sweet converse with each other and communion with their adorable Saviour in the paradise of God.

REV. WILLIAM PURDY.

It has cost many inquiries to elicit even the few facts embraced in the following brief sketch. Most who were familiar with the daily life and diversified labors of its venerable subject, have long since been removed and "gathered to their fathers;" nor have the few dates of family records or indistinct recollections of surviving relatives, furnished the desired information, or fully gratified a laudable curiosity.

William Purdy was born April 14th, 1749, at Horse Neck, Fairfield county, Connecticut. Of his early training or youthful promise nothing of interest has been distinctly left or definitely learned. It is, however, presumed that he was religiously educated under Baptist influences. A Baptist church being organized

in his native town some two years previous to his birth, it is probable that his parents became members and educated their children in their distinctive principles. Their son Silas entertained Baptist sentiments as also did many other members of the Purdy family.

At the early age of twenty, Wm. Purdy was united in marriage, October 25th, 1769, with Miss Rachel Purdy, who was only fifteen years of age. He then moved into the State of New York, and resided for a time at "Nine Partners," in Dutchess county. Leaving this place he lived for some years at New Marlborough, in Ulster county, a few miles north of Newburgh. While living at this place it is believed that he was baptized on a profession of faith by Rev. Jacob Drake, afterwards settled in Pennsylvania at Exeter on the Susquehanna river, and received as a member of the Baptist church at Pleasant Valley, on the opposite side of the Hudson. He was soon ordained a Deacon of this church, and subsequently licensed to preach the Gospel.

In the year 1792 he moved with his family into Northampton county, now Wayne, Pennsylvania, and settled some four miles north of the "Lackawa Settlement"—now Paupack—on a tract of wild land which he had previously purchased. His brother Silas had also settled some two miles south on the north-west bank of the Wallenpaupack. He immediately commenced preaching in the neighborhood and soon extended his labors to surrounding settlements. His efforts were owned and blessed; among others a number of the members of his own family were brought to a saving knowledge of the truth. The Palmyra Baptist

Church, organized of fifteen members, was recognized in September, 1801, by a council convened for that purpose. Mr. Wm. Purdy was ordained as pastor of this infant church on the day of its recognition. The public services were conducted by Revs. John Caton, of Brookfield, New York, Wm. Bishop, of "Capouse Meadows," and Epaphras Thompson, of Mt. Pleasant. Mr. Purdy immediately baptized three of his own sons. It was a day of holy joy and grateful praise. "The wilderness and the solitary place" was made "glad for them, and the desert" began to "rejoice and blossom as the rose."

Under his persevering labors the church was measurably prospered and gradually enlarged. He also endeavored to inculcate sound doctrine and enforce a salutary discipline. Thus strength and stability were secured and perpetuated. He also manifested a laudable interest in planting new churches and promoting the general prosperity of the cause. He was present at the recognition of Abington Church and ordination of John Miller, in the Autumn of 1802, and participated in the public services on that interesting occasion. He also took a leading part in the organization of the Abington Association in 1807, and acted as chairman of the committee appointed to draft its constitution. He frequently presided over the deliberations of this body and preached the opening sermon at its anniversaries.

He had stated appointments at various out-stations scattered over an extensive field. He preached regularly at Salem, Cherry Ridge, Indian Orchard, and "Lackawa Settlement." But his ministerial labors were

not confined to the church of which he was pastor or the immediate vicinity. He was accustomed to take an annual tour beyond the Moosic mountain to preach at distant settlements scattered over the hills and along the valleys of that wild region.

In making this tour he rode on horseback, traveling over difficult roads or following dangerous paths, through an almost unbroken wilderness. Follow the solitary traveler in his annual circuit as he climbs over rugged ridges, descends through dark valleys or traces the meandering water course. Taking leave of family and friends he starts on his solitary journey; entering the forest he passes through Salem and crosses the mountain at * "Cobb's Gap," and descending along Roaring brook into the valley at "Capouse Meadows"—now Scranton—and crossing the Lackawanna, he calls at the log-cabin of Rev. Wm. Bishop, on the present site of Hyde Park, where he receives a fraternal greeting and partakes of genuine English hospitality. Thence he follows down the Lackawanna river—halting perhaps by the way at the house of Mr. Eleazer Atherton, in the "Gore,"—to its confluence with the Susquehanna at Pittston in full view of "fair Wyoming," and calls on Mr. John Phillips, one of the "Green mountain boys," or stops with Dr. Nathaniel Giddings, where he is kindly entertained after the most approved New England style. He next turns his course up the

*This opening in the Moosic mountain took its name from Dea. Asa Cobb, who had emigrated from the State of New York, and settled with his family in 1791, at this "gap" on the Indian path leading from the Wyoming Valley to Coshutunk on the Delaware river. He died March 24th. 1808, in the 58th year of his age. His funeral discourse was preached by the pastor of Palmyra Church, of which he was a member and deacon.

Susquehanna, now under projecting crags, now by water falls, then in fertile plains, passing through Exeter, Newton and Falls, until he arrives at Tunkhannock. He now turns his face homeward, following up the Tunkhannock creek to Thornbottom, an early settlement about a mile above the present depot of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Rail Road. Thence he continues his journey up the winding stream to its confluence with Martin creek, which he follows to Hopbottom—now Brooklyn Centre—an ancient Irish Settlement. Thence he passes over the hills to “Nine Partners”—now Harford—and is welcomed to the hospitable *mansion of Mr. Elkanah Tingley. From this place he pursues his weary way across rugged ridges through “Elkwoods” and among the broken spurs of the Moosic mountain, to Mt. Pleasant, where he is warmly welcomed to the home and heart of his friend and fellow-laborer, Rev. Elijah Peck. He now passes down to Bethany and stops at the house of Mr. Ephraim Torrey, where he is cordially greeted and kindly entertained. But he may not linger; the thoughts of loved ones at home urge him onward. He passes the junction of the Dyberry and Lackawaxen, the present site of Honesdale, through Indian Orchard and Cherry Ridge, and finally arrives at his home in Palmyra, where warm hearts welcome the weary wanderer to the ease and endearments of family and fireside. See what he has accomplished. He has traveled upwards of a hundred miles over bad roads, through sun-shine and storm, preached at some

* This commodious dwelling, erected in 1808, is now, after a lapse of half a century, in excellent condition and occupied by Dea. Freeman Tingley, son of Darias and grand-son of Elkanah Tingley. It is still a “Baptist tavern” where the weary find rest and the worthy refreshment.

twelve settlements, baptized perhaps a few converts, and comforted and encouraged many Christian hearts. He frequently repeats this solitary journey, passing over the same route, stopping at the same places, calling on the same persons, "confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith."

Mr. Wm. Purdy continued the esteemed pastor of Palmyra Church nearly a quarter of a century, laboring without a stated salary and sustaining his family by his own exertions. He died March 1st, 1824, in the 75th year of his age and 28th of his ministry. His funeral sermon was preached by Rev. George Dobell, who succeeded him as pastor of the church, and is still living in Salem. His wife, by whom he had nine children, six sons and three daughters, survived him only a short period. She died October 20th, 1828, also in her 75th year, having been a devoted Christian upwards of a quarter of a century. She was buried by the side of her husband in the family cemetery, on the farm of his brother Silas, situated on a gentle elevation overlooking the Wallenpaupack, where its dark waters reverently bend towards the resting place of these departed saints. Two rude slabs of brown stone, erected long since by an only surviving son, mark their graves and bear a dim but appropriate inscription. Two trees, an apple and an oak, blend their dark shadows on this wild spot, and mingle their autumnal leaves over the sleeping dust of the silent dead.

Most of their children have followed them to the grave, only three of the nine surviving. All except one made a public profession of religion; some were devotedly pious. Mr. Wm. Purdy, Jr., one of the

sons, was a minister. Having supplied the Bethany church for a time, in 1821 he emigrated to the West and settled at Killbuck, Holmes county, Ohio, where he was instrumental in gathering and organizing an "Old School" Baptist church of which he was pastor until his decease, November 24th, 1846, in the 74th year of his age and 29th of his ministry.

Their grand and great-grand children are very numerous and widely scattered, living at various places in the Eastern, Middle, and Western States, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. A large number are professors of religion and members of the Baptist denomination. Thus the influence of this pious couple is already widely felt and will doubtless continue to extend to the close of time, affecting and blessing generation after generation of their lineal descendants.

REV. JOHN MILLER.

It will be unnecessary to present more than a brief outline of the active life and abundant labors of the venerable subject of this sketch. To do more would necessarily embrace a history of the Baptist cause in north-eastern Pennsylvania, so intimately interwoven were his life and labors with its origin and progress. He was one of the first to erect the Baptist standard in this region, and among the foremost to rally to its support and defence. In the Abington Baptist Association he was the moving spirit and acknowledged leader for nearly half a century. It was organized in his house, and received the impress of his mind; in subsequent years it was fostered by his anxious care and guided by his prudent counsels.

John Miller, born February 3d, 1775, in Voluntown, now Sterling, Windham county, Connecticut, was one of six children, five sons, and a daughter. His parents were not wealthy, but were worthy citizens. His father was a Universalist, and his mother a Baptist. His paternal grandfather was a Presbyterian clergyman and preached the Gospel for nearly half a century.

Little is known to the writer of his early life ; of his opportunities or associations ; of his favorite pursuits or future promise. On the farm with his father, he was early inured to honorable toil, and trained to agricultural pursuits. Thus early habits of useful employment, were formed and fostered, and his physical faculties and powers developed and disciplined, laying a broad basis and firm foundation for a hardy constitution and honorable character. The education he received was comparatively limited ; a knowledge of the branches usually taught in common schools was its utmost extent. His moral and religious culture was not forgotten or neglected. He enjoyed the watchful care and judicious counsels of a pious and prayerful mother, when they were most necessary to shield him from the evil influence of wicked examples and erroneous doctrines, and to instil into his tender mind correct principles of morality and religion. Her maternal care and counsels were not without their salutary influence ; the seeds of correct principles, thus early sown, germinated and sprung up in subsequent years, and yielded an abundant harvest.

He continued to live with his parents at Voluntown, Connecticut, until he was fourteen years of age, when they moved some four miles distant to Plainfield, in the

same State. While at this place, in the Summer of 1793, in his 18th year he was brought under especial religious influence, and awakened to a sense of his lost condition. An extensive revival was enjoyed in the vicinity, and a large number of persons hopefully converted. John Miller was among the number. Awakened under the pointed appeals of the Gospel and powerful influence of the Holy Spirit, he was led to see himself a ruined sinner, and to cast himself on the divine mercy. Peace was given and pardon granted. He was soon after baptized, on a profession of faith, by Rev. Nathaniel Cole, and became one of the constituent members of a Baptist church, organized in that place. He lived at Plainfield until he was nineteen years of age, when his parents emigrated with their children to the State of New York, and settled at North Norwich, in the Chenango Valley. He also became one of the constituent members of a Baptist church, organized in that place. At the age of twenty-two, he was united in marriage with Miss Polly Hall, of his native place, February 18th, 1797. Soon after, with his youthful companion and limited means, he moved with his parents to Hardwick, Otsego county, New York. He united by letter with the Baptist church in that place. After remaining here a few years, he emigrated with his family to Pennsylvania, and arrived at Tunkhannock, now Abington, Luzerne county, on the fifth anniversary of his marriage, February 18th, 1802, and in the twenty-eighth year of his age, in the vigor and strength of his early manhood. Here he settled, and has since lived and labored until his decease, February 19th, 1857, aged 82 years and

16 days. His wife was the fifth female in the settlement. This region was then an almost unbroken forest—the haunt of the wild beast and the hunting ground of the savage. A few families had preceded him in the settlement, and others subsequently followed. At various points in the surrounding wilderness, openings were soon made and settlements commenced; the ancient forest slowly retired before the sturdy stroke of the woodman's axe, and the deer and the elk, the wolf and the panther, were startled from their lairs by its echo among the hills, and gradually driven from their lurking places by the advancing tide of an enterprising population. Waving fields of "golden grain" now rejoiced the heart and rewarded the toil of the hardy pioneer. A comfortable log-cabin sheltered his growing family and welcomed his weary steps; the log-barn with open doors and thatched roof, garnered his hay and grain and protected his flocks and herds from the whirling sleet and wintry storm. Mr. Miller, in common with others, participated in the trials and triumphs, the privations and privileges connected with the origin and progress of the Abington settlement.

But pleasant families and comfortable homes were not the only blessings to be desired or to be sought. The comforts of the body or culture of the mind will bear no comparison with the conversion of the soul or claims of God, in their real interest or vital importance. Moved, doubtless, by these or similar considerations, the attention of Mr. Miller was arrested and turned from secular pursuits to the sacred work of preaching the "glorious Gospel of the blessed God."

In obedience to his own convictions of personal duty, without "consulting with flesh and blood," he entered at once upon the responsible work in June of 1802. His first efforts were attended with cheering tokens of divine approbation and a large number of persons, considering the sparseness of the population, were hopefully converted. But thus far they had no organized church or ordained minister. This want was soon met and supplied. On the 18th of November, 1802, the Abington Baptist Church was recognized with fifteen constituent members, and Mr. Miller ordained as its pastor, with appropriate religious services by a council of ministers and members, called for that purpose. He continued the esteemed pastor of this church until 1853—upwards of half a century. During that time his labors were arduous and abundant. Few have lived and labored so long on the same field with an equal degree of efficiency and success. Doubtless many imperfections have mingled with his efforts and often marred their fruits, but God has been pleased to employ him in his service, and graciously own and greatly bless the labors of his servant.

Mr. Miller diligently cultivated an extensive field. It formerly embraced the northern part of Luzerne, and portions of Wyoming and Susquehanna counties, commencing at the summit of the Moosic mountain on the north-east, and extending down its south-western slope, over the Abington hills and beyond the waters of the Susquehanna. His preaching stations were scattered over this extensive field; they were quite numerous and often many miles distant from the place of his residence. He was accustomed to preach fre-

quently at Benton and Blakely, Clifford and Carbondale, Eaton and Exeter, Newton and Northmoreland, Pittston and Providence, Greenfield and Tunkhannock, and at various other points within and beyond the limits of this extensive field. East and West Abington, however, were his principal stations—centres of effort and influence. Here his appointments were most frequent and the fruits of his labors most apparent.

The old church at Abington Centre has enjoyed an unusual degree of numerical prosperity under his protracted ministry. At an early period a numerous membership was gathered into this church, and gradually augmented, with occasional reverses, until he resigned the pastoral charge in 1853. His ministerial labors, however, were not devoted exclusively to the spiritual interests of this church or the immediate vicinity, but during the earlier portion of his ministry, he was accustomed to travel on foot or ride on horseback from three to thirty miles through the wilderness, following meandering paths or guided by marked trees, to preach the Gospel and plant churches in distant and destitute settlements. These long and lonesome journeys were not only attended with many hardships from the length and roughness of the way, but often by much danger from the wolf, panther, and other beasts of prey that still infested many portions of this wild region and prowled over its craggy heights or skulked through its dark valleys and dismal swamps. But not shunning hardships or shrinking from dangers, the man of God pursued his solitary way to seek the lost and save the ruined. The sacrifice was accepted, souls were converted and saints comforted through his efforts and instrumentality.

Marked results have followed his ministerial labors both at home and abroad. He sowed "precious seed" and gathered a bountiful harvest. He stated to the writer a few months previous to his decease, that the church, while under his pastoral care, had enjoyed fourteen general revivals and received large and frequent accessions. He had baptized on a profession of faith, not far from two thousand converts, attended about one thousand eight hundred funerals, and solemnized the nuptials of nine hundred and fourteen persons or four hundred and fifty-seven couple. During that time six whole churches and parts of six others had colonized and become independent bodies at various points in the surrounding country. Seven ministers of the Gospel had also been raised up in the church, most of whom are now settled as pastors of Baptist churches at different and some at distant places.

But Mr. Miller did not shrink from the responsibilities of other relations than those of pastor and preacher. Social duties and domestic cares claimed and received a reasonable share of his time and attention. He did not consider secular pursuits entirely inconsistent with his sacred calling. He was accustomed to mingle with the people in their daily business and worldly avocations. He married their children and buried their dead, and sympathized with them in their pleasures and privations. He could wield the axe or swing the scythe, and follow the plough, or gather the harvest. He could earn his bread and support his family by the toil of his own hands and the sweat of his own brow. This was not uncommon with the pioneer ministers of this wild region. This custom, originating in necessity,

has frequently been continued from choice, much to the injury of the cause, prosperity of the church and usefulness of the ministry.

Mr. Miller was not wholly shielded from domestic trials and afflictions. Death crossed the threshold and entered his dwelling. The wife of his early choice and mother of his eight children, died November 22d, 1822, in her forty-eighth year, leaving his heart sad and his home desolate. She had shared with him the hardships of a new settlement and the cares of a numerous family. Five of their eight children, three sons and two daughters, have deceased; two sons and one daughter are still living. He was united in marriage, April 13th, 1823, with Miss Elizabeth Griffin, who now, in her sixty-sixth year, survives him with her only son, to mourn his loss and journey alone.

Mr. Miller continued to attend to his business and preach the Gospel until within the past two months. He attended a funeral and preached his last sermon, January 1st, 1857, and thus solemnly closed an active and efficient ministry of upwards of fifty-four years. Since that time until his decease, he has been confined to his sick room and compelled to sit in his chair as the only mode of enduring severe pains and securing needful repose. He was not idle during these weary weeks, but he occupied his thoughts in recalling the scenes of his eventful life and employed his pen in committing them to paper, at the request and for the gratification of his family and friends.

After lingering for some weeks in great pain, on the afternoon of Thursday, February 19th, 1857, in full possession of his reason, he calmly passed from the

scenes of his mortal life and earthly labors. He was fully aware of his coming change, and had made all necessary arrangements for his funeral solemnities. He had selected the preacher and designated the services. His funeral was attended at 11 o'clock, A. M., on Saturday following his decease, by a large circle of mourning relatives and sympathizing friends. The writer of this notice, preached a sermon from Acts i. 8, and presented a sketch of his life and labors. His was the record of human life—born, married, died—these follow each other in quick succession and waft us onward to the shores of that world where these waves of human weal, want and woe may never reach, never rage. Mr. Miller has passed over these waves and attained the shores of that world. Yes, his active life has ceased and his abundant labors have closed. His warning voice is hushed in the silence of death; his manly form is mouldering in the gloom of the grave and his ransomed spirit is reclining on the bosom of Infinite Love.

REV. ELIJAH PECK.

It will be impossible to present more than an imperfect outline of the life and labors of the subject of this sketch. Like most of his cotemporaries, he neither preached from notes nor took note of his preaching; his object was rather to win souls to Christ than to elicit applause from the world. Hence, he has left few facts on record from which to sketch his active life and abundant labors.

Elijah Peck, born May 3d, 1767, in Warren, Litchfield county, Connecticut, was the thirteenth child of

poor but pious parents. Left an orphan in early childhood, he was adopted into the family of a neighboring farmer and trained to agricultural pursuits. His literary opportunities were exceedingly limited. He attended school during the Winter months for a few years and acquired a knowledge of the branches usually taught in common schools. This was the extent of his education.

At the age of twenty-two he was united in marriage with Miss Elizabeth Pinny, of his native town. Immediately after, with his youthful companion, he left his early home and came to Cooperstown, Otsego county, New York, where he remained for some few years. Early in the Spring of 1795, he moved with his wife and three children into the "Beech Woods," and settled at Mt. Pleasant, Northampton county, now Wayne—Pennsylvania. The journey was performed with an ox team and sled. He had previously come to the place and purchased a lot of wild land; made an opening in the dense forest and erected a log cabin. He had also harvested a crop of wheat and stacked it in the open field, and done all in his power to provide a comfortable shelter and needful supply for his little family. But when he returned with his wife and children to take possession of his new home, he was disappointed to find that during his absence the bears had demolished his stack and devoured his wheat. This was a great misfortune. Few harvests had been gathered and no grist-mill had yet been erected in the vicinity, consequently suitable provisions were very scarce and exceedingly costly. It is related that he and his family subsisted for some seven weeks on *hulled*

corn. This was hard but wholesome fare. Thus, in common with others, he endured many privations and hardships incident to pioneer life. At this time the settlement embraced only six families besides his own. The country for miles around was an unbroken wilderness.

At an early age his attention had been directed to the importance of personal religion. "One night," to quote from an obituary notice prepared by his widow soon after his decease, "when but a child while imploring the divine mercy, a lovely form appeared as his friend; when he arose in the morning he seemed to be in a new world—field and forest seemed radiant with beauty and vocal with praise." These peculiar exercises were carefully concealed from his scoffing companions and soon almost forgotten amid the empty allurements of youthful sports. But whatever their origin or design, they were frequently recalled in riper years, and doubtless exerted a salutary restraint on his conduct and moulding influence on his character.

In the Fall of 1800, Rev. Epaphras Thompson, a Baptist minister from Bristol, Connecticut, came to Mt. Pleasant and preached the Gospel with marked effect and general acceptance. A large number of persons, considering the sparseness of the population, were hopefully converted. Elijah Peck was among the number. Aroused and enlightened under the appeals of the Gospel and influence of the Holy Spirit, his former exercises were vividly recalled and prayerfully reviewed. This seemed to him to be the last call. He was made sensible of his guilt and danger. "His sins," to quote as above, "rolled up before him like

dark mountains, and the law from Sinai thundered in his ears the sentence of condemnation. He gave up all for lost and became a constant mourner." But his friend of lovely form again appearing, he fell at his feet and cast himself on his mercy. Hope dispelled his fears and joy banished his sorrows. The Saviour was now to him indeed, "the one altogether lovely and chief among ten thousand."

It was not long before the Free Communion Baptist Church was re-organized in Mt. Pleasant, with fourteen constituent members. Mr. Peck not making a public profession of religion at once by uniting with the church, his mind soon became entangled in doubts and enveloped in darkness. While in this distressing state of mind, by request, he related his religious exercises before the church, "beginning where the Lord began with him, and when he came to the point where his friend had appeared, his doubts were removed and his darkness dispersed." Strong faith now possessed his mind and divine light pervaded his soul. Soon after this he was baptized by Mr. Thompson and received as a member of the church. About this time the mind of Mr. Peck was exercised on the duty of preaching the Gospel; he longed to warn sinners to "flee from the wrath to come," and point them to the "Lamb of God." With the approbation of the church and in obedience to his own convictions of duty, he entered at once upon the responsible work; his first efforts were characterized by a laudable zeal and attended with encouraging tokens of divine approbation.

In June, 1806, at the age of thirty-nine, Mr. Peck was ordained to the work of the Gospel ministry. In

the following Summer, however, becoming dissatisfied with open communion, by searching the Scriptures and observing its evil tendency on the order and discipline of the church, he and seven others took letters of dismission and organized, September 6th, 1807, as an independent body, and adopted Articles of Faith and a church Covenant. On the 9th of October following, they were recognized as the Regular Baptist Church of Mt. Pleasant, with appropriate religious services, by a council called for that purpose from Abington and Palmyra churches.

Mr. Peck was the esteemed pastor of Mt. Pleasant Church from March 3d, 1808, until his decease, March 16th, 1835—upwards of a quarter of a century. Under his ministry the church continued for many years to enjoy much prosperity. Within the first eighteen years of its existence, it increased from eight to near a hundred communicants. This, however, was the culminating point in its numerical prosperity under his pastoral labors. The last ten years of his ministry were not attended with the same degree of apparent success that had characterized his earlier and more efficient labors. However, during the entire period of his ministry his labors were arduous and abundant. He was accustomed to preach during the week as well as on the Sabbath, in private dwellings at various stations scattered over an extensive field. He frequently traveled on foot or rode on horseback from four to forty miles through the wilderness, following foot-paths or guided by marked trees, to preach the Gospel in distant and destitute neighborhoods. Thus he went forth like his Master to seek the lost and save the ruined.

To the labors of the ministry were added the cares of a numerous family and toils of an active life. He was accustomed to wield the axe and fell the forest; to shoulder the rifle and pursue the game. He was one of the first supervisors of the town, and previous to the war of 1812, captain of a military company. During the earlier portion of his ministry he depended chiefly on his own efforts to provide for the wants of himself and family. This was a necessity with the pioneer ministers of this wild region. The members of the Mt. Pleasant Church, however, were among the first to provide a partial support for their pastor. In the Spring of 1826, the church decided to raise Mr. Peck a salary of one hundred dollars *per annum*.

In the Spring of 1813 he was called to taste the bitter cup of domestic affliction. On the 17th of May of that year, the wife of his early choice and mother of his twelve children, deceased, leaving his rural home desolate and burdened heart almost in despair. Having been a member of the church some five years and mistress of his household nearly a quarter of a century, she was esteemed a sincere Christian, a fond mother and faithful companion.

Miss Elizabeth Horton became his second wife and shared his domestic cares. Having survived him with their two sons to mourn his loss, she remains a widow and resides on the homestead at Mt. Pleasant.

Mr. Peck continued to attend his appointments and preach the Gospel until the Summer of 1834, when he received a paralytic stroke which was repeated at intervals until his speech and memory failed. In this condition he lingered till March 16th, 1835, when he

calmly fell asleep. His funeral sermon was preached by Rev. Henry Curtis at his request, from 2 Cor. 13: 11. A large circle of relatives and friends attended his funeral and followed him to the grave. His mortal remains now rest in the family cemetery near his early residence, under an apple tree planted by his own hand. A plain marble slab marks the place of his rest and bears an appropriate inscription.

It is related by those who knew him personally, that Mr. Peck was rather above the medium stature, slightly stooping; of slender form and sharp features. His general appearance indicated great activity and power of endurance. His voice was musical and pleasant and his manners affable and modest. Without superior natural talents or attainments, he had studied the Scriptures during his hours of leisure with prayerful attention, and stored his mind with a rich fund of religious knowledge. With little order or arrangement in his discourses, yet his flowing tears and fervent manner excited an interest in the minds of his audience and usually secured their earnest attention. But whatever were his talents or attainments he moved in a sphere of great usefulness and "served his own generation by the will of God." He has passed from the toils of earth to the rest of heaven. Let us cherish his revered memory, emulate his holy zeal, and imitate his self-sacrificing example.

